

THE HOLMANS OF  
VERAESTAU

ISRAEL GEORGE BLAKE



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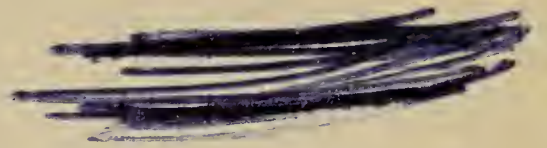
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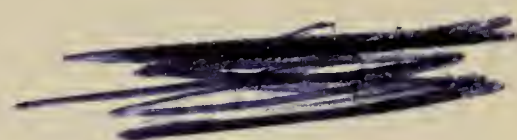


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EDITORS

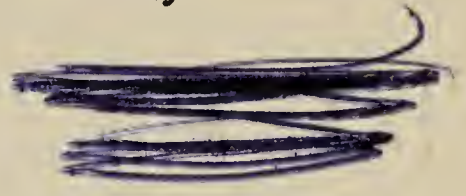
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MEN OF AMERICA

VOLUME IV

THE HOLMANS OF VERAESTAU



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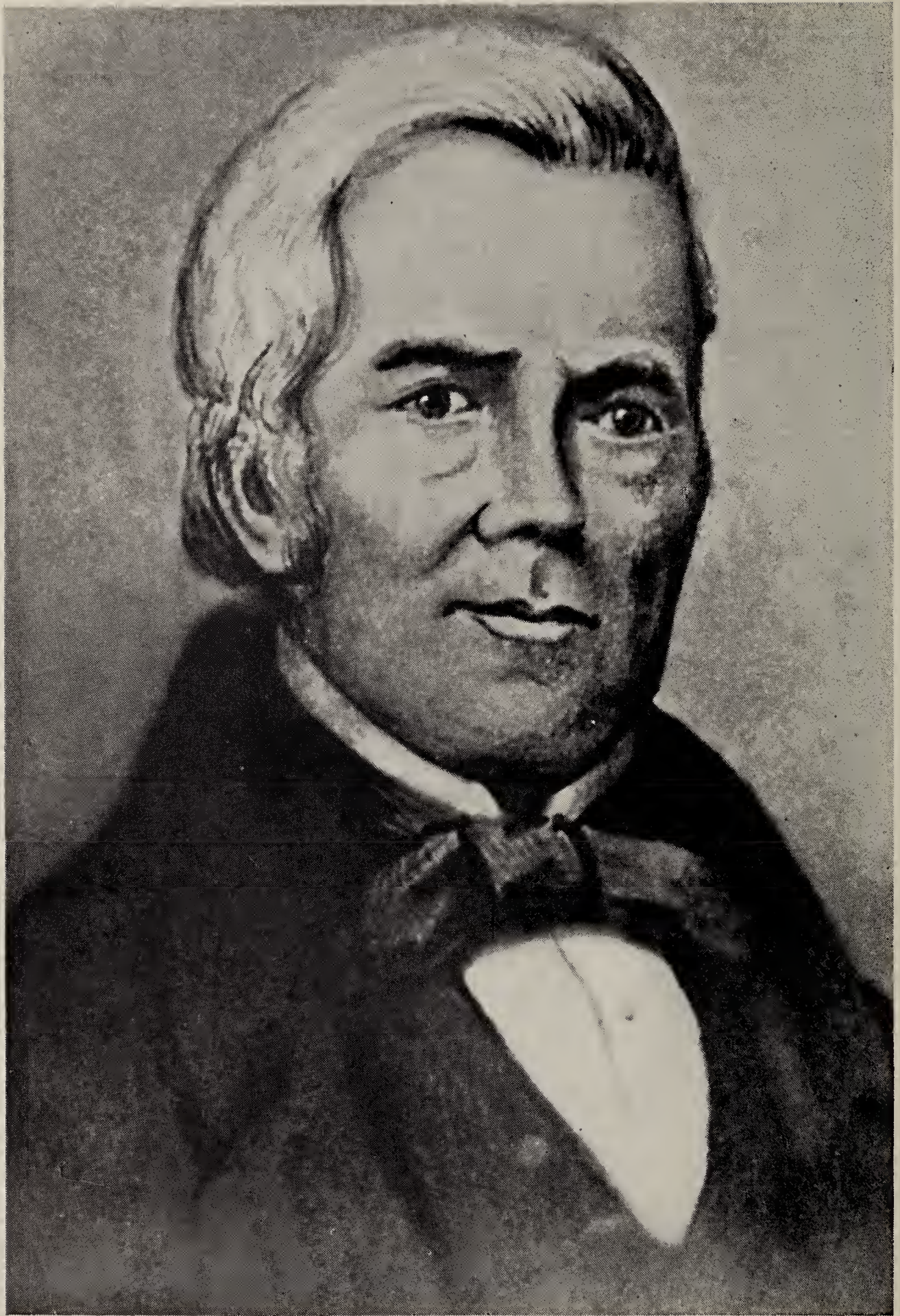






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Jesse Lynch Holman



# THE HOLMANS OF VERAESTAU

By  
ISRAEL GEORGE BLAKE  
Franklin College



Oxford, Ohio  
The Mississippi Valley Press  
1943



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*Printed in the United States of America*

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*To*

*Frances and Martha Jane*





## EDITORS' FOREWORD

The men who made America were many. Preacher, pioneer, farmer, journalist, and statesman, they gave their muscle and talent to the moulding of a nation dedicated to human liberty. They represented all shades of political belief and unbelief. When they were elected to public office they wrangled, tapped the pork barrel, and legislated.

Perhaps no legislators were more typical of nineteenth-century politics than the Holmans from Veraestau in the Hoosier State where the Wabash and the Ohio flow. Of sturdy pioneer stock, the Holmans emigrated from the fierce and bloody ground of Kentucky to Indiana. There father and son distinguished themselves in many spheres of influence. They supported church and school and were respected members of the bar and bench. But their influence reached beyond the boundaries of Indiana.

The younger Holman, known as the "Watchdog of the Treasury," served many years as a member of the national Congress. While there he interested himself in the slavery controversy, saw the crisis mounting during Buchanan's administration, became a "war Democrat," and consistently voted against the Thirteenth Amendment. He was not convinced that Lincoln's second election was beneficial to the country.

Professor Blake's interpretation of the Holmans, father and son, is friendly and sympathetic. For years he has investigated manuscript materials pertaining to their private and public careers in the Library of Congress and state and local depositories. Public documents were analyzed, pamphlets were turned, and newspapers were searched to yield pertinent information. Private papers, notes, and letters, under Professor Blake's skillful eye yielded colorful glimpses and hitherto unknown facts. The result is a scholarly characterization of two local figures who played distinguished roles in their state and nation.

C.M.T.  
P.D.J.





## PREFACE

Jesse Lynch Holman and his son, William Steele Holman, served their state and country during a period of more than four score years. From the time the elder Holman first came into Indiana Territory in 1811, until the veteran Congressman was relieved of his earthly duties in 1897, the name of Holman was a synonym for simplicity, justice, and integrity.

While neither the father nor the son became a nationally outstanding figure in American political life, both have left indelible marks on the institutions and history of their day. The life of the father has been sketched because of his influence on the personality and beliefs of the son, but the larger part of the study deals with the political career of "The Watchdog of the Treasury."

William Steele Holman lived through one of the most difficult periods of American history. Much attention has been given to his political speeches, especially those uttered in the national House of Representatives, of which he was a member for a longer period than any other man up to the time of his death during his sixteenth term.

It would, of course, be impossible in a work of this kind to give full acknowledgment to the many persons who have aided in the collection and use of the materials for the preparation of this study. I can not ignore, however, the valuable contributions of the men and women of the various library staffs who have given much of their time in aiding me in my search for materials. Special credit is due to the late Miss Esther U. McNitt, Chief, Indiana Division, Indiana State Library, to Miss Caroline Dunn, Librarian, The William Henry Smith Memorial Library, Indianapolis, and to Dr. Thomas P. Martin, Assistant Director of the Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress.

The many members of the Holman family have been most kind in furnishing me with whatever material was at their disposal. Special thanks are due to the Misses Margaret and Mildred



Wagenhals, great-granddaughters, and Mrs. Emerine Rees, granddaughter, of Jesse Lynch Holman, and to Mrs. Frederick Harvey and the late Mrs. Leslie Fletcher, daughters of William S. Holman.

Two men have stimulated me in the preparation of this book, and to these men I desire to express my thanks. To Mr. Cornelius O'Brien, the present owner of the Holman estate, Veraestau, I am most deeply indebted. Without his constant encouragement and support, this work could not have been carried forward. Professor William Orlando Lynch, of the Indiana University History Department, has been most kind in his advice and counsel.

I. George Blake

## CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	Editors' Foreword .....	ix
	Preface .....	xi

### PART I

I.	Early Years .....	1
II.	Servant of the People, 1810-1842 .....	9

### PART II

III.	Early Political Career .....	43
IV.	Critical Years .....	70
V.	A War Democrat .....	98
VI.	During the Age of Hate .....	128
VII.	Champion of Jeffersonianism .....	174
VIII.	End of An Era .....	221
	Notes .....	235
	Bibliography .....	263
	Index .....	271

### ILLUSTRATIONS

Jesse Lynch Holman .....	Frontispiece
Title Page of <i>Prisoners of Niagara</i> .....	18
Jesse L. Holman Home About 1890 .....	19
Veraestau As It Appears Today .....	51
William Steele Holman .....	115





## PART I

### JESSE LYNCH HOLMAN

#### CHAPTER I

#### EARLY YEARS

**H**IGH UP on a bluff overlooking the Ohio River, from which may be had a magnificent view of the surrounding natural beauty for over ten miles in any direction, stands Veraestau, the homestead of the Holman family. There both Jesse Lynch Holman and William Steele Holman tended their cattle, raised their flowers, chatted with neighbors, and prepared themselves for public service. Veraestau is today one of the more beautiful spots of southern Indiana. The site was chosen in 1811 when Jesse Lynch Holman brought his young wife and child from Kentucky to build a log cabin which was to be their first home in the new country. Indiana Territory was virtually a wilderness with few settlements of any consequence. Indians were "trading their peltries, wild game and moccasins ornamented with the quills of the porcupine, with the settlers, for calicoes, whiskey, powder, lead, beads, and such other articles as met their fancy."<sup>1</sup>

Less than fifteen years before the region was actually controlled by the British, although nominally in possession of the United States. In July, 1796, the British finally evacuated the posts within the boundaries of the United States northwest of the Ohio River, and the way was clear for the organization of the new territory. Four years later, on May 7, 1800, Congress organized the Territory of Indiana, with the material parts of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 remaining in force. Indiana inhabitants were invested with all the rights, privileges and advantages granted and secured to the people by that ordinance.<sup>2</sup> William Henry Harrison, a native of Virginia, was appointed

the governor of the new territory, and John Gibson, a native of Pennsylvania and a distinguished western pioneer, was named the secretary. The frontier town of Vincennes became the capital. William Clark, Henry Vandenberg, and John Griffin were appointed territorial judges.<sup>3</sup>

When Jesse Lynch Holman came into Indiana in 1811, the territory had a population of nearly 25,000 scattered along the Ohio, the Wabash and the Whitewater rivers. Rather extensive manufacturing was being carried on for a frontier region. There were located in the various communities

33 grist mills; 14 saw mills; 3 horse mills; 18 tanneries; 28 distilleries; 3 powder mills; 1,256 looms; 1,350 spinning wheels; value of manufactures—woolen, cotton, hempen and flaxen clothes, \$159,052; of cotton and woolen spun in mills, \$150,000; of nails, 30,000 pounds \$4,000; of leather tanned, \$9,300; of distillery products, 35,950 gallons, \$16,230; of gunpowder, 3, 600 pounds, \$1,800; of wine from grapes, 96 barrels, \$6,000; and 50,000 barrels of maple sugar.<sup>4</sup>

Frontier conditions in Indiana Territory appealed to young Holman who was only twenty-six years old when he crossed the Ohio and entered the land of his choice. The new country was big. Apparently there were unlimited possibilities which beckoned the young couple on the threshold of their married life. They might grow with a territory which was soon to become their state. They were both well adapted by background and training to play a leading role in the new life which lay before them. Kentucky, from which they had emigrated, was still considered a pioneer country, having reached the age of statehood less than twenty years before.

Although little is known of his early life, it was under the most primitive conditions of a frontier community that Jesse Lynch Holman was born, near Danville, Kentucky, on October 24, 1784. He was one of fourteen children, his father having married three times.<sup>5</sup> Throughout his infancy and boyhood he was surrounded by the hardships common to the backwoods settlers of his day. His father, Henry Holeman (the son preferred the simpler spelling of the name),<sup>6</sup> had migrated in 1776 from Virginia to Kentucky, where in 1789 he met his death at the hands of hostile Indians while he was attempting to relieve



a beleagured blockhouse in which his wife Jane and their children had taken refuge.<sup>7</sup>

About the only facts which are available concerning Holman's family background are to be found in some scraps of manuscripts which he wrote in later life. These indicate family connections and give other interesting bits of information on the circumstances surrounding his boyhood. From these sources it is learned that his mother's name was Jane Gordon. Little is known of her family except that it originated in Scotland. She had a brother John "who remained in Maryland" and with whom she corresponded. It was reported that Jane had a younger sister named Polly who also came to Kentucky. In addition, Holman's brother, Edward, trekked to Kentucky.

Edward's son, George, was taken prisoner by the Indians when a small boy and continued with them until he was grown. Later, when he was restored to his family and friends, he was so anxious to return to the Indians that a constant watch had to be kept over him. It is said that George was one of the first settlers in Henry County, Kentucky and was one of the original proprietors of the town of New Castle. While with the Indians, George often traversed the eastern and northern sections of Indiana. He seemed delighted with the country near the head of the Whitewater River. As soon as this land was surveyed and offered for sale, he made a purchase and removed his family from Kentucky. He thus became one of the first settlers in the Whitewater country which later became Wayne County, Indiana.

George's oldest son, Joseph, married a daughter of Ephraim Overman, a Quaker, who had frequently represented Wayne County in the state legislature. Joseph himself was chosen a representative from that county several times and held other offices. The paternal side of the family also experienced the adventures typical to pioneers.

Jesse related an interesting experience which his family had in early Kentucky. At one time, the Holmans composed the entire force in a fort at Bullitt's Lick. Indians surrounded them, their communication with Louisville was cut off, and the fort placed in great jeopardy. No relief could be expected from Louisville. Bardstown, nearly fifty miles distant, was the nearest



station to which the Holmans could look for assistance, and they decided to send a message there for help.

There was no hope that a messenger could elude Indian vigilance by day. There was extreme danger also in attempting a break by night. Jesse's brother, Henry, was the only person who could undertake the escape with any prospect of success. Late at night he stole out of the garrison on foot and crept silently through the forests without even disturbing parties of Indians that were lurking near the fort. Henry hastened to Bardstown arriving there before the close of the next day.

But new perils here awaited him. Bardstown also was surrounded by Indians. Henry discovered a small party of them as he drew near and found that they constituted a large force. Unobserved, he slipped through their lines after the Indians had grown sleepy.

When Henry told the Bardstown frontiersmen that help was needed, they concluded that they could give no aid. The attacking force was too strong for them to spare any riflemen. Henry, therefore, retraced his weary and hazardous path to Bullitt's Lick alone. Again he passed unnoticed through the lines of Indians. He arrived at home in a little more than fifty hours from the time he started.<sup>8</sup>

The death of Henry Holeman, Jesse's father, in 1789, deprived the family of its main means of support. The Holmans were destitute. By persistent effort, however, young Jesse managed to obtain a common school education, and he soon became accomplished in the higher branches of mathematics and in general literature.<sup>9</sup> In his childhood, he was a daily reader of the Bible. In later life he recollected a sermon that he had heard when he was only four years old. He joined the Baptist church when he was seventeen.<sup>10</sup> He was one of the pioneer school teachers of his community, and it is said, that he began his long preaching career when he was still a youth. This gave him valuable experience and training for his later religious activities.<sup>11</sup> Throughout his life his religious feelings were manifested with a boldness and consistency of character that proved that he was not ashamed of his religion. One of the ruling motives of his heart was the salvation of souls.<sup>12</sup> According to tradition, the fundamentals of law were learned by young Holman in the

Lexington offices of Henry Clay. Possibly Clay saw in his protege great possibilities as a leading lawyer.<sup>13</sup>

Holman's literary talents were demonstrated in a sentimental novel which he wrote before his twenty-first birthday. It was entitled *The Prisoners of Niagara, or The Errors of Education*, and gained a large circulation for those days. Holman has been called Indiana's first novelist although his book was written outside of the state of Indiana.<sup>14</sup> The novel was of the romantic type.<sup>15</sup> Holman named one of his own daughters Emerine because of his affection for the book.<sup>16</sup> In later life, however, the author became convinced that the morals of the book were not suitable for the minds of young people and he attempted to buy up and destroy the entire edition. Nevertheless, two copies are known to be in existence today.<sup>17</sup> In spite of Holman's attitude toward his work, some of the best scholars of his day have expressed the belief that the moral tone of the novel was at least as elevated as the better class of fiction of the early part of the century. Apparently, the author became too harsh a critic of his own product.<sup>18</sup>

One of the copies which has been found contains 357 pages, size 4 by 6½ inches, and is bound in worn boards and leather. It looks more like a Bible than a novel. Apparently, Holman had no opportunity to examine proofs of his novel, for in a short message "To the Reader" he says:

When this "airy trifle" was presented to the public, the author was conscious it contained a sufficiency of errors to amuse the attention of the critic; but when he examined the printed copy, owing to his absence while the work was at press, the difficulty of the manuscript, and various other causes, there are more errors in the impression than he expected. This circumstance, together with the consideration, that the paper is inferior to what he intended, induces him in justice to release from their obligations, all those friends who have been so polite as to subscribe for the work. The binding will now be different from the first propositions, and every person is at liberty to purchase the book *as it is*.<sup>19</sup>

Perhaps Holman's first intention was to publish his novel in two volumes, but the extant copies are printed in one. The book deals much with Virginia and the western country during the time of the American Revolution, with Indians, hairbreadth escapes and other dramatic incidents. "The Errors of Educa-



tion" portion of the title is accounted for by the training of the hero in Richmond, Virginia; "The Prisoners of Niagara" is explained by the fact that Fort Niagara plays an important part in the story. The entire novel is told by the hero in the first person and undoubtedly represents much that Holman heard from the lips of his father. Perhaps the actual episodes are from his father's life as he was a Virginian who migrated to Kentucky. The style of the novel is somewhat Byronic—very intense, passionate, often extremely sentimental. The spirit is that of adventure, love of freedom, hatred of slavery, and opposition to drunkenness and all forms of immorality.<sup>20</sup>

It is said that Holman read the poets with the ardor of one of them. He wrote many short poems which were published in his lifetime. He also wrote two lengthy poems which were legends of Indian life.<sup>21</sup>

Holman was admitted to the Kentucky bar on September 2, 1805, having barely reached his majority.<sup>22</sup> He practiced law at New Castle, Port William, and later at Frankfort, Kentucky.<sup>23</sup> While practicing at Port William, now Carrollton, Kentucky, he met Elizabeth Masterson, the daughter of Judge Richard M. Masterson, one of the leading jurists of the state and a landed proprietor. She was related to General William O. Butler, of Kentucky, who became a conspicuous general officer in the Mexican War in 1845-46. For a time, he was commander-in-chief of the United States army of occupation in that country and was a candidate for vice-president on the ticket with General Lewis Cass, the candidate for president in 1848.<sup>24</sup> Mrs. Holman was said to be an estimable lady of liberal education, superior natural endowments, and great force of character. Her tastes were similar to those of Holman. She was two years younger than her husband, having been born on December 13, 1786.<sup>25</sup> Their marriage took place in 1810, and the next year they set out for their new home in Indiana Territory.

After leaving Kentucky, the Holmans journeyed up the Ohio River and landed in Indiana near the present site of Aurora in Dearborn County. Accompanying them was a large family of slaves which Mrs. Holman had inherited from her father. After crossing the Ohio, Holman emancipated the group, as it was contrary to the Northwest Ordinance and the laws of Indiana



Territory to import slaves into the new land.<sup>26</sup> It is probable that some of them became indentured servants.

The countryside was virtually a wilderness, but the Holmans visualized its future greatness. A more magnificent spot for a home could hardly have been found. Four miles up the river was the growing town of Lawrenceburg, and the "Queen City of the West," Cincinnati, was located twenty-one miles above on the Ohio. About nine miles down the river from Veraestau was the town of Rising Sun, a thriving community.<sup>27</sup> The site on the bluff chosen by Holman for his future home rose four hundred feet above the Ohio River. Up the river from this bluff, the Ohio sweeps around in a great bend. Forests clothed all the higher ground, and rich bottom lands gave great promise for future development.

On the very summit of the hill, Jesse Lynch Holman built his log house, which was one of the finest in the region. So enthusiastic was the young attorney over the location of his new home, that he named it Veraestau, from parts of three Latin words—*Ver*, spring; *aestas*, summer; and *autumnus*, autumn.<sup>28</sup> Holman's ideal was: "There was to be no winter in the new abode. And though the winter storms howled with terrific violence at times, the winter outside of the house was never reflected within."<sup>29</sup>

It was in the dead of winter when Holman brought his young wife and child to their new home, Veraestau. An interesting story is told of their first experience on the bluff:

It was a bitter night, and tradition says that after bringing his family to the home, Mr. Holman had to walk back two miles to the Eagle Hotel, at the mouth of Hogan Creek, and get a shovelful of glowing coals to start his fire. How he ever got them safely to the top of the cliff is a miracle, but he did so, and the hearth of the first Indiana Holman was soon glowing brightly.<sup>30</sup>

Holman had secured title to the land upon which his log cabin stood on August 16, 1810. It was not long, however, before he added a substantial structure made of brick burned locally. Holman owned this home until October 26, 1839 when he sold it to Allen Hamilton, his son-in-law, who made further alterations, including a front entrance with a window on either side in Greek

revival style. Veraestau was made impressive also by an Indian mound of perfect contour which stood at the entrance to the lane leading to the house and by a mighty oak which lifted its branches near the house and close to the edge of the cliff.

Jesse Holman, even before disposing of his first house to Hamilton, had begun construction of another home. In 1837, he built the house in which he was to reside the remaining years of his life. This home was as strong and stalwart as the pioneer spirit which conceived it. Joists were of hewn ash and walnut and oak logs. The lathes were split, yellow poplar. A panelled front entrance was made impressive with four columns of solid walnut.

It was only natural, of course, that his son William should seek to establish himself near his father and Veraestau. Although William S. Holman had resided in Wilmington and in Lawrenceburg, he built a cottage about midway between the Hamilton house and the new home of Jesse L. Holman during the decade prior to the Civil War. As his family grew, William added more rooms and during the 'seventies he constructed a two-story addition on the north end of the house. His family commented that he had made a "big, ugly house out of a pretty little house."<sup>31</sup>

## CHAPTER II

### SERVANT OF THE PEOPLE, 1810-1842

THE FRONTIER conditions of Indiana Territory in 1811 appealed to a man who had the blood of pioneers in his veins. There was much to be done, and it was to be a work of conquest—an eternal struggle with the elements for supremacy. Roads had to be built, swamps must be drained, and lands cleared and made ready for agricultural purposes. The pioneers forged valiantly ahead, even though

the conquest of the soil, the disarming of unseen hostile forces were for them gigantic enterprises against which their meager equipment could but slowly avail. Meadow and swamp were infested with venomous snakes and poisonous insects. Malaria and insidious fevers undermined the health of the strongest. Physical suffering and unrelieved pain aroused terrors in the most confident and bravest. For every inch of ground the wilderness exacted its toll of human energy and life. Through pain and suffering, childhood, youth and maturity learned stern lessons and the irrevocable laws of nature.<sup>1</sup>

This was the lot of the pioneer, Jesse Lynch Holman, as he worked for the development of the territory which was soon to become a state. But the struggle was not without its rich rewards. Men's wits were sharpened and their intellects were challenged to keener action by hardships. Their characters became as rugged as the wilderness they were attempting to subdue. A fine sense of citizenship and civic duty was cultivated, and from actual experience they learned the rules of incipient statehood. It was claimed:

They anticipated the needs of future society and produced men as strong and capable as the world has ever seen. Community interests resolutely met tested them as social, economic and moral forces. Time has proven their loyalty as citizens and established their record as heroes and benefactors of mankind.<sup>2</sup>



In such an environment, Holman as a young lawyer and farmer was soon recognized as a man of the people, and it was not long before his peculiar abilities were to be demonstrated. From 1811 until his death in 1842, his life was spent almost uninterruptedly in the public service.<sup>3</sup> Men of his brains, ability, courage, and daring were needed in the new country. Holman soon became the political and social leader of his community. He was a man of affairs, and his neighbors and friends eagerly sought his counsel and advice.

Perhaps it was only natural that on May 28, 1811, less than a year after Holman first crossed the Ohio, Governor William Henry Harrison should appoint him prosecuting attorney for Dearborn County.<sup>4</sup> He took the place of General James Dill.<sup>5</sup> Just two days before he took the oath of office as prosecuting attorney, he was granted a license to practice law in the new territory. The license read:

Whereas, we two of the Judges of the General Court for the Territory of Indiana are authorized by an Act of the Legislature of said Territory, to grant Licenses to all Persons to Practice in the Courts of said Territory as Counsel & Attornies at Law, who may produce sufficient, Vouchers to satisfy us that they are of Good Moral Character, and are qualified for the discharge of said office

And whereas Jesse L. Holman hath made application to us for permission to Practice as Counsel & Attorney at Law in the said Territory and hath produced satisfactory proof of his good Moral Character and of his having been a Licensed Attorney in the State of Kentucky, and on Examination hath appeared sufficient for the discharge of said office We do therefore License & authorize the said Jesse L. Holman to practice as Counsel & Attorney at Law in the Superior and Inferior Courts of said Territory during the time of his good behaviour in said office.

The license was dated June 26, 1811, and was signed by Henry Vandenburg and B. Parke.<sup>6</sup>

An interesting account of the judiciary system as it existed at the time Holman was appointed prosecuting attorney is given by a contemporary, Oliver H. Smith. In describing the associate judges of the Circuit Court, known then as "side Judges," he claims that they "made no pretensions to any knowledge of the law, but still they had the power to over-rule the presiding judge, and give the opinion of the court, and sometimes even

'out-guessed' the president [judge], giving the most preposterous reasons imaginable for their decisions."<sup>7</sup>

The courthouses were small frame or log buildings, with the court and grand jury at either end. The petit jury was usually located in a nearby building. The clerks were not particularly qualified for their positions, but "they were honest, and the most of them could write more legibly than Rufus Choate, United States Senator." The people elected the sheriffs whose particular qualification seemed to be their ability "to call jurors and witnesses from the woods, from the door of the court-building, and their ability to run down and catch offenders."<sup>8</sup> Smith adds:

The most important personages in the country, however, were the young lawyers, universally called "squires" by old and young, male and female. Queues were much in fashion, and nothing was more common than to see one of these young "squires," with a wilted rorum hat that had once been stiffened with glue in its better days, upon a head, from the back of which hung a queue three feet long, tied from head to tip with an eel-skin, walking in evident superiority, in his own estimation, among the people in the court-yard, sounding the public mind as to his prospects as a candidate for the Legislature. There were no caucuses then. Every candidate brought himself out and ran upon his own hook. If he got beat, as most of them did, he had nobody to blame but himself for becoming a candidate; still he generally charged it upon his friends for not voting for him, and the next season found him once more upon the track, sounding his own praises.<sup>9</sup>

A typical courtroom of those days was simply furnished, but it seemed to answer the purpose. The judges sat at one end of the room on a platform raised about three feet. They actually sat on a long bench which was usually substantial enough to hold the heaviest judge, "yet on one occasion the bench gave way, and down came three fat, aldermanly judges on the floor. One of them, quite a wag, seeing the 'squires' laughing, remarked—'Gentlemen, this is a mighty weak bench'."<sup>10</sup> When court was in session, the members of the bar were seated on benches near the clerk, and the crowd was kept at a distance "by a long pole fastened with withes at the ends." The "crowds" of that day looked upon the holding of court as a gala occasion. They



came from far and near to see the judges and hear the lawyers "plead." Smith relates the following incident:

On one occasion there came on to be tried before the jury an indictment for assault and battery against a man for pulling the nose of another who had insulted him. The court-room was filled to suffocation. The two associate judges on the bench. The evidence had been heard, and public expectation was on tip-toe. All was silent as death, when my young friend, then "squire," afterward Judge Charles H. Test, rose and addressed the court: "If the court please." He was here interrupted by Judge Winchell from the bench. "Yes, we do please; go to the bottom of the case, young man. The people have come in to hear the lawyers plead." The young squire, encouraged by the kind response of the judge, proceeded to address the jury some three hours in excited eloquence upon the great provocation his client had received to induce his docile nature to bound over all legal barriers and take the prosecutor by the nose. All eyes were upon him, and as he closed, Judge Winchell roared out, "Capital; I did not think it was in him!" The jury returned a verdict of "not guilty," amid the rapturous applause of the audience. Court adjourned, and the people returned home to tell their children that they had heard the lawyers "plead" . . .<sup>11</sup>

Holman was not only prosecuting attorney for Dearborn County, but he also served in the same capacity for Jefferson County from November 4, 1812. He had been appointed prosecuting attorney *pro tempore* by the Court of Common Pleas on October 19, 1812.<sup>12</sup> During the next three years, he became so popular that he soon found himself a member of the territorial legislature which had been meeting in Corydon, the territorial capital since 1813. Isaac Dunn, a member of the fourth territorial legislature (second session) from Dearborn County, resigned sometime between January 6 and June 1, 1814, and Holman was elected to complete his term.<sup>13</sup> Consequently, he was a member of the special session which was called by Governor Thomas Posey, to reapportion the territory for the election of councillors. It met on June 1, 1814.<sup>14</sup> In the fifth territorial legislature (first session), August 15 to September 10, 1814, Holman was one of the legislative councillors,<sup>15</sup> and was chosen president of the Council, or upper house.<sup>16</sup> On September 14, 1814, he was appointed by Governor Posey, presiding judge of the Second Judicial Circuit, comprising Clark, Harrison, Jefferson, and Washington counties.<sup>17</sup> He took the oath of office on



September 20 before Isaac Dunn, clerk of Dearborn County, and served until December 21, 1816.<sup>18</sup> He then served as judge of the Third Circuit, of Dearborn, Franklin, Wayne, and Switzerland counties, from March 1, 1816, to December 18 of the same year.<sup>19</sup> The salary of the circuit judges was \$700 per year.<sup>20</sup>

The life of a circuit-riding judge in those days has been described vividly by a contemporary member of the bar:

The great variety of trials and incidents on the circuit gave to the life of a traveling attorney an interest that we all relished exceedingly. There was none of the green-bag city monotony, no dyspepsia, no gout, no ennui, rheumatism or neuralgia; consumption was a stranger among us. An occasional jump of the toothache, relieved by the turnkey of the first doctor we came to, was the worst. All was fun, good humor, fine jokes well received, good appetites and sound sleeping, cheerful landlords and good-natured landladies at the head of the table. . .

Our attorneys were ready, off-hand practitioners, seldom at fault for the occasion. Sometimes we had to meet attorneys from other States, who would fling in the Latin and other technical terms with a triumphant air, but in most cases they were foiled by the quick retorts of our bar.<sup>21</sup>

On September 7, 1814, the legislature approved an act for the formation of a new county out of the counties of Dearborn and Jefferson. Jesse L. Holman was one of the commissioners appointed to fix the seat of justice in the new county of Switzerland. The commissioners were

to convene at the house of John Frances [sic] Dufour, on the seventeenth day of October next, and proceed to fix the seat of justice in the new county of Switzerland, in conformity with, and in all respects agreeable to an act passed at the session of the Legislature in the year one thousand eight hundred and thirteen, entitled "an act for fixing the seats of justice in all new counties hereafter to be laid off."<sup>22</sup>

The growing territory, meanwhile, was fast taking on the characteristics of a state. By 1815, its total population was in excess of 63,000, and steps were quickly taken to acquire statehood. In his message to the last regular session of the territorial legislature, which convened at Corydon in December, 1815, Governor Posey congratulated the people upon the general progress of the territorial settlements and the great growth in population, and recommended reduced taxation, a greater sup-

port of education, the improvement of the roads and highways, a revision of the territorial laws, and a strengthening of the militia system. The legislature passed several laws preparatory to the formation of a state government, and, on December 14, 1815, a petition was addressed to Congress begging for the authority to adopt a constitution and to form a state government. This memorial was laid before Congress on the 28th by Jonathan Jennings, the territorial delegate. Congress did not hesitate to grant this request. On April 19, 1816, President Madison gave his approval to the bill creating the state of Indiana. The people lost no time in holding an election for the forty-three delegates to a constitutional convention which met at Corydon from June 10 to June 29, with Jennings presiding and William Hendricks acting as secretary. The character and work of the convention is well summarized by Dillon:

The convention that formed the first constitution of the State of Indiana was composed mainly of clear-minded, unpretending men of common sense, whose patriotism was unquestionable and whose morals were fair. Their familiarity with the theories of the Declaration of American Independence, their Territorial experience under the provisions of the Ordinance of 1787, and their knowledge of the principles of the constitution of the United States were sufficient, when combined, to lighten materially their labors in the great work of forming a constitution for a new State. With such land-marks in view, the labors of similar conventions in other States and Territories have been rendered comparatively light. In the clearness and conciseness of its style, in the comprehensive and just provisions which it made for the maintenance of civil and religious liberty, in its mandates, which were designed to protect the rights of the people collectively and individually, and to provide for the public welfare, the constitution that was formed for Indiana in 1816 was not inferior to any of the State constitutions which were in existence at that time.<sup>23</sup>

In the first state election, which was held in August, 1816, the people chose Jonathan Jennings as their governor and Christopher Harrison as the lieutenant-governor. William Hendricks was sent to the national House of Representatives. The first state legislature met at Corydon on November 4, 1816, with John Paul as president *pro tempore* of the Senate and Isaac Blackford as speaker of the House. Among its first acts was the election of James Noble and Waller Taylor to represent the



new state in the national Senate.<sup>24</sup> The vote was twenty-six for Noble, twenty for Taylor, sixteen for James Scott, three for Jesse L. Holman, two for Ezra Ferris, two for Davis Floyd, two for Walter Wilson, and one for Elias McNamee.<sup>25</sup>

On November 5, a resolution was introduced in the lower house by Amos Lane proposing that a committee be appointed for the purpose of considering the expediency of choosing electors for President and Vice-President of the United States. The members of this committee were Amos Lane from Dearborn County, John Dumont from Switzerland, Ratliff Boon from Warrick, Thomas Carr from Clark, and Edward Hogan from Gibson. This committee was to meet with a similar committee from the Senate. On recommendation of this joint committee, the legislature, on November 11, designated Jesse L. Holman, Thomas H. Blake, and Joseph Bartholomew as presidential electors, receiving thirty-six, twenty, and twenty-five votes, respectively.<sup>26</sup> These three electors cast their votes for James Monroe.<sup>27</sup>

There was a great deal of political jobbery in evidence even in this early day. Oliver H. Smith, long connected with the political affairs of Indiana, found when he first came to the state that it was controlled by "three parties, or rather one party with three divisions—the Noble, Jennings, and Hendricks divisions."<sup>28</sup> These men realized that for any one to secure any political advantages, a working arrangement had to be set up for their mutual benefit. Consequently, they agreed to aid one another by making Noble the senator, Jennings the governor, and Hendricks the representative in Congress.<sup>29</sup> Their political workers in the constitutional convention arranged an apportionment

to suit all parties. It was provided, at the close of Section 20, Article 3, "Nor shall any member of either branch of the General Assembly, during the term for which he is elected be eligible to any office, the appointment of which is vested in the General Assembly. *Provided*, that nothing in the constitution shall be so construed to prevent any member of the first session of the General Assembly from accepting any office that is created by this Constitution, or the Constitution of the United States." There were three judges to be appointed for the Supreme Court. Each subdivision was entitled to one. General Noble selected Jesse L. Holman



. . . , a good lawyer and one of the most just and conscientious men I ever knew. Governor Jennings selected John Johnson, a fine lawyer and an excellent man . . . Governor Hendricks named James Scott, of Clark county, . . . one of the purest men in the State, a good scholar, and a fine lawyer . . .<sup>30</sup>

The commissions of the first Supreme Court judges of Indiana bear the date of December 28, 1816. The appointment was for a seven-year term. According to law, the first term of the court was to commence on May 5, 1817. On that date the judges appeared and took their seats.<sup>31</sup> Their work at first did not appear burdensome. Only two cases were on motion before the court in the first term, and only three in the second.<sup>32</sup> The judges themselves were held in high esteem by the bar and the public alike. "The reports of their decisions stood even higher than those of the Supreme Court of Ohio," in the judgment of Smith, "and were held as good authority in most of the States."<sup>33</sup> Holman was considered "a great judge," careful, laborious, and exact. A more conscientious man never lived, was the opinion of one observer.<sup>34</sup> He was also described as a man without enemies, though one who never shirked a duty.<sup>35</sup> His friend Horace Bassett said of him: "His decisions are before the public. They will compare with the most eminent Jurists of the Country; showing the full exercise of a clear and decering [discerning] mind, and that stern integrity which constitutes one of the highest of Judicial ornaments."<sup>36</sup>

One case in particular which came up during Holman's service on the bench deserves notice, as it expresses rather conclusively his attitude toward the slavery question. It was purely a test case, and no mention of it was made in the press of the day, either during the time it was before the court or after the decision had been announced. This shows that there was no particular excitement over the matter, and probably confirms the tradition that the case was merely brought before the court through a quiet, friendly agreement. The purpose of the case was to give judicial assent to the exclusion of slavery from the state of Indiana. The details of the case are not important, except that Polly, the mulatto in question, was declared by the lower court to be the property of one Colonel Lasselle. The case was taken on appeal to the Supreme Court of the state, and

the question was presented with an elaborate discussion of the law and the history relating to it.

One side of the argument contended that slavery was excluded from the Indiana Territory by the Ordinance of 1787, and from the state by the new Constitution. The contrary argument maintained that the Ordinance of 1787, not only did not prohibit slavery that existed at the time of its adoption, but that it also expressly preserved it, and that the slave property guaranteed by it could not be divested by the constitution. Judges Scott, Holman, and Blackford took a middle ground. They held that the Virginia deed of cession and the Ordinance were immaterial—that the question must be decided by the provisions of the constitution. They declared that it could not be denied that legislative authority, uncontrolled by any constitutional provision, could emancipate slaves. Such action had been done in several of the states. The judges reasoned that it was within the legitimate powers of the constitutional convention, in forming the state constitution, to prohibit the existence of slavery in the state of Indiana. They concluded that the framers of the state constitution intended a total and entire prohibition of slavery in the state and said they could conceive of no form of words in which that intention could have been more clearly expressed.<sup>37</sup>

It was held, therefore, that Polly was no longer a slave. By this decision, the slavery question in Indiana so far as any legal basis was concerned was brought to an absolute end. "There was no longer any excuse whatever for holding a negro in involuntary servitude in Indiana except pure ignorance."<sup>38</sup>

So acceptably did Holman serve as a member of the Supreme Court that he was appointed by Governor Hendricks for another seven-year term. His commission was dated December 29, 1823, and he took the oath of office before Daniel Bartholomew, one of the justices of the court in Dearborn County, on February 27, 1824.<sup>39</sup>

Although Judge Holman no doubt wished to be appointed for another term, yet he disliked to be away from his beloved fireside for any length of time. That he had the physical welfare of the various members of his family pretty much at heart



is revealed in the following letter addressed to his daughter and son-in-law at Fort Wayne:

I regret to learn . . . that you my darling Emerine are unwell. . . . It becomes you to be extremely careful of your health, and to avoid all possible exposure that might bring on those chills & fevers to which it seems you have become so liable. By last letter I received a letter from your dear sister Eliza, stating that your ever to be beloved & honored mother was also unwell, & had been so for several days. I trust it is nothing serious. . . . I am extremely anxious to be at Veraestau. It is now nearly four weeks since I left home—A longer absence than I expected. And it will be at least a week before I can return.

\* \* \* \*

There is more business in our Court than common, & we shall dispatch more than we have done at any one term for several years. . . . The term of the Court thus far has been a pleasant one. But I am anxious to return to the beloved objects I have left behind me. . . .<sup>40</sup>

Politics played a major role in the judicial affairs of the state and Holman eventually became intrigued by the game. Even during his first seven-year appointment, most political observers saw the handwriting on the wall. Throughout his service on the Supreme Court there had been considerable juggling of the state offices. Smith's comment is interesting: "The State organization and the distribution of offices went on swimmingly, the chiefs changing hands as in a country dance."<sup>41</sup> Jennings had not been a very popular governor. His foes criticized his every act. They charged that he had violated the clause in the new constitution which declared that no person holding an office of trust under the United States would be eligible for governor or lieutenant-governor.<sup>42</sup> In 1819 Jennings sought re-election. Early in that year, Jesse L. Holman was his sole opponent,<sup>43</sup> but Holman's candidacy was not popular. Christopher Harrison entered the race. Jennings defeated Harrison by a vote of 9,068 to 2,007.<sup>44</sup>

Holman's candidacy for the governorship, however, evidently was at first promoted without his knowledge or approval. In a letter dated May 19, 1819, addressed to a Mr. Brown, a newspaper editor, he attempted to remove the impression from the minds of his fellow-citizens that he was a candidate at the en-



THE  
J. S. WILLIAMS.  
PRISONERS OF NIAGARA,

J. S. WILLIAMS. OR

ERRORS OF EDUCATION.

A NEW NOVEL,

FOUNDED ON FACT.

BY JESSEE L. HOLMAN,  
A NATIVE OF KENTUCKY.

To know ourselves diseased, is half our cure  
Y

——— Looking up, I viewed  
A vast gigantic spectre striding on,  
Through murmuring thunders, and waste  
With dreadful action.

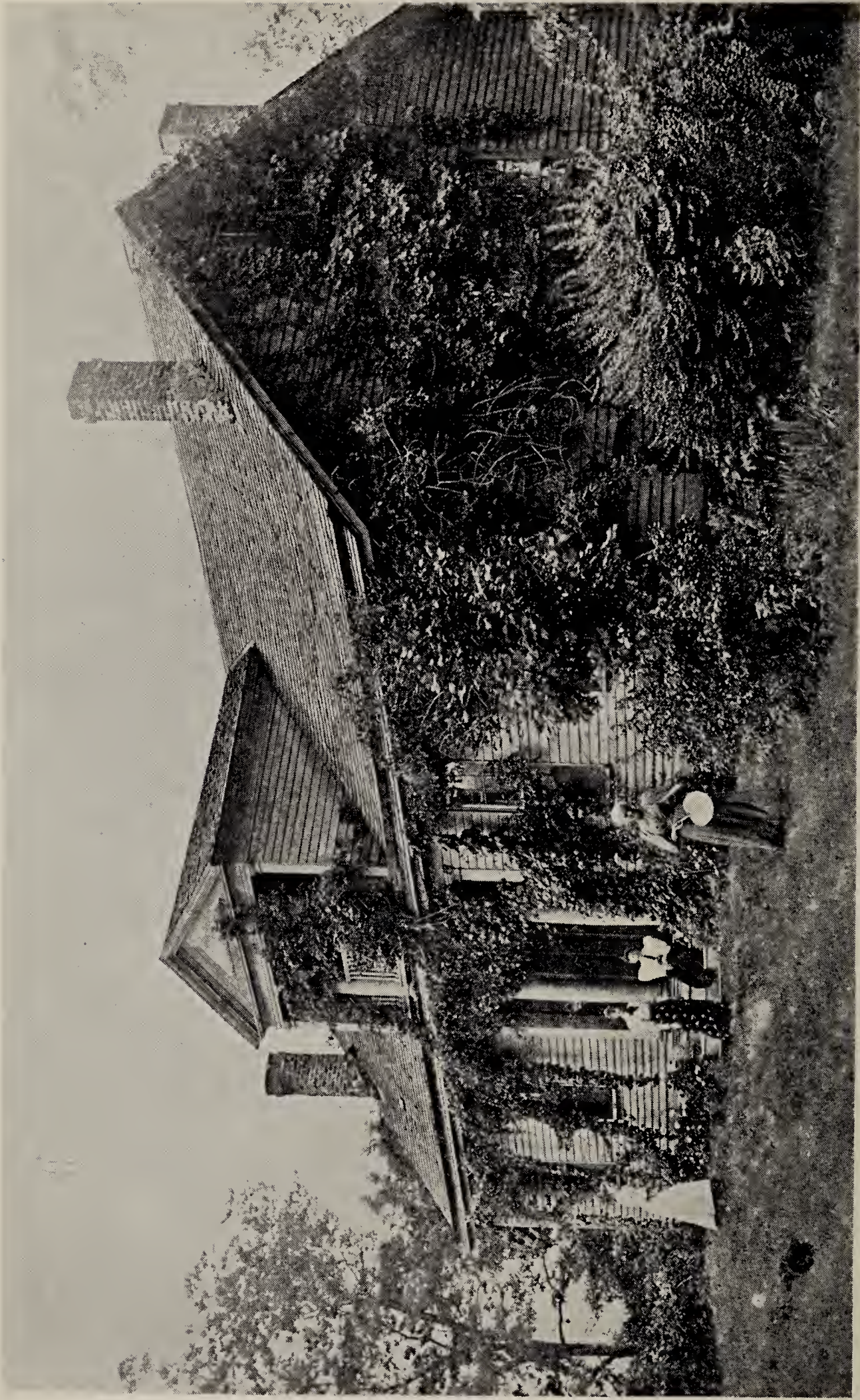
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PRINTED BY  
WILLIAM GERAR

1810.

Title Page of Prisoners of Niagara





Jesse L. Holman Home About 1890



suing election and vigorously condemned in the following terms those people who were determined on his candidacy:

The use of my name, as a Candidate, in the public prints, has originated in mistake; which I would have corrected at an earlier date, had I been apprized of the circumstances by which it was occasioned. With those circumstances I am unacquainted, & would willingly have remained silent until I obtained further information on the subject, did not the increasing use of my name as a Candidate demand from me a speedy & explicit declaration.

Flattered as I have been by the solicitude of my friends; feeling the warmest sentiments of gratitude for the honor their partiality would willingly confer upon me, it is not without some unpleasant sensations that I feel myself compelled by domestic concerns to act contrary to their wishes; and to inform my fellow-citizens generally, what I have uniformly declared to those with whom I have conversed on the subject, that it is not my desire to be considered as a Candidate for the distinguished office of Governor.

It had been reported that Holman's name had been used as a candidate by the authority of a letter written by him, but he declared that this was undoubtedly a mistake as he felt certain that he had not written any such letter. When his friends had first requested that he be a candidate, he unhesitatingly replied that it was far from his intentions to seek the office, but he later consented to take the subject under consideration. In a very short time he became satisfied that he could not accept the gubernatorial office.

However, before he had an opportunity of communicating this conclusion to his friends, Holman's name had gone forward as a candidate. His friends continued to place his name before the people. While this increased Holman's reluctance to disappoint his friends, and increased his gratitude to them, it had not altered his domestic duties nor his final determination. While he thus declined the suffrage of his friends for the highest office in the gift of the people of Indiana, he again assured them

that their zeal in my behalf, has exerted in me the most grateful feelings—feelings which I hope will have their proper object in stimulating my utmost exertions, so to discharge the duties of public and private life, that those, whose partiality would now confide to me the highest trust, may never blush to own that they were once my friends.<sup>45</sup>



In spite of the expressions contained in this letter, however, Holman had been advised early, even by Jennings himself, that there was a movement to make him governor. In a letter dated Corydon, December 19, 1818, Jennings described the political situation existing at the time, and declared that there were several people who

seem very anxious to fix on a candidate that may out poll me next August, and talk as if desirous of having a *caucus* for that purpose. The Senate had nothing to do in the whole transaction, at least by any act which appears on the record of their proceedings. Those who are most desirous of affecting me urge the idea of bringing you forward as a candidate for the office of Governor at next election. . . .<sup>46</sup>

Jennings gave up the governorship in 1822 and went to the national House to take the place of Hendricks who had become governor. James Noble was again elected to the Senate. On the death of Waller Taylor, Governor Hendricks resigned the governorship and became a candidate for the vacant place in the Senate. He defeated his competitor, Isaac Blackford.<sup>47</sup> The president of the upper house in the state legislature, James Brown Ray, then became acting-governor. The third district sent Judge John Test to Congress, Jonathan Jennings represented the second district, and the first district elected Ratliff Boon. The situation was described by Smith:

Thus stood political and judicial matters at the time the second election of Monroe came on before our legislature. There was no opposition. The people knew nothing about it. The Legislature sitting at Corydon, appointed the electors. The first notice I had that there had been a Presidential election, was from an extract in our Connersville newspaper taken from the Corydon paper, giving the names of the electors . . . and giving the vote of the State for James Monroe and Daniel D. Tomkins [sic], and yet as good and quiet an administration followed as any that is likely to be produced by our exciting elections at this day. . . .<sup>48</sup>

Political jugglery by a clique was bound to have its effect upon the politics of the state, and the Supreme Court judges were to be no exception. Various groups of electors were chosen in the presidential election of 1824, supporting Jackson, Henry Clay, or John Quincy Adams. Isaac Blackford of Knox County, Jesse L. Holman of Dearborn County, David H. Maxwell of

Monroe, James Scott of Clark, and Christopher Harrison of Washington, threw their strength to Adams.<sup>49</sup>

Soon after James Brown Ray became governor, he intimated that the members of the Supreme Court would fall under his political ax. In 1830 their terms expired. Judge Blackford was reappointed, largely because, declared Smith, "he had been the unsuccessful competitor of Governor Ray, and the governor thought he could make friends in the Blackford ranks by nominating him."<sup>50</sup> At first it was fully expected that Ray would not dare use the ax against the members of the court. Horace Bassett, in a letter of November 13, 1830 to Judge Holman from Logansport, stated his belief that Ray would not remove any of the judges:

Much is said here, with regard to the ultimate course the Govr. may take in respect to the Supreme Court. The general opinion is that he will nominate the present incumbents. Any other course would be very unpopular here. For senator, all are desirous of a change, but no one believes it will take place.<sup>51</sup>

Further light is thrown on the situation in a letter to Holman from Charles H. Test:

I have heard it bandied about lately, that myself, with others of the family, are making efforts to effect a change in the Judges of the Supreme Court, and as I knowing that there are those in the east end of the State who would gladly make an impression of the kind upon the members composing that court, I have taken the liberty of intruding for a moment upon your business to repel the charge, at least so far as it may apply to *myself*—Immediately after hearing the matter spoken of, I took occasion to enquire of my father, and brothers in law, what they said in relation to your reappointment; they all denied in the most positive [sic] terms, having interfered in the least with the subject—and indeed were we ever so much inclined to meddle, there are none of us sufficiently in the *graces* of his Excellency to influence his nomination. . . . The motive assigned for wishing a change on the Supreme Bench is to dispose of Smith, who it is supposed will be a candidate for Congress in this *district*—Smith perhaps himself may suppose that we would be glad to get rid of him, and would interfere to get him on the bench. . . . Whatever may be Mr. Smith's suppositions in relation to this subject, he has never had any other reason to suppose we would favour his views, except his vanity may have prompted him to believe we dreaded his *overwhelming popularity*. In this however he is mistaken. . . .

With regard to myself I can say that I am not in favor of the *modern*



doctrines of *Reform*. The good of the country does not require a change in the Supreme Bench that I am apprized of, and from what I can ascertain the Senate of the State is of that opinion.<sup>52</sup>

In his reminiscences, however, Smith asserts that Governor Ray had offered him a seat on the bench soon after his inauguration, "but having no judicial ambition, and not being willing to be laid on the bench at a salary of 700 dollars, I had the fortitude to resist the temptation."<sup>53</sup>

The final result was that Ray refused to appoint Judges Scott and Holman for another term, and the offices were given to Stephen C. Stevens and John T. McKinney.<sup>54</sup> The charge was made at the time, and it was very generally believed, that Ray's refusal to reappoint Scott and Holman

was because they had declined to aid him in his senatorial aspirations. . . . This action . . . cost him many friends. . . . His popularity waned and finally disappeared. The people believed this action of Governor Ray was promoted by personal reasons and not for the public good, hence they withdrew their support and confidence from him.<sup>55</sup>

That the appointments were not very popular is supported by a letter from John Test who did not think that the people of the state were satisfied with the appointees. He believed Smith intended to have been a candidate for Judge Scott's place, "but I expressed myself so freely about his integrity and qualifications, that I think he was induced to turn about and oppose me." Test assured Holman that he had nothing whatever to do with the arrangement of the nomination. He said:

I told you last fall before you left home for Indianapolis, that I wished all the old Judges reappointed, and spoke to you very freely concerning some statements or tales that were circulating about you and Judge Scott—That I presume was enough to satisfy you, as to my stand on the subject. . . . Two things I have ever strictly observed through my whole political career—*never to betray a friend, or forget my pledge*—and when I do either I shall have taken leave of my senses [*sic*]*—I understand that Jos. Holman has come out for Congress a whole hog Jackson man, died in the wool—Amos Lane half horse, half alligator, and moves in real Steam-Boat stile—Jona. McCarty full blooded fighting cock, twin brother to the Little Red—"all for Jackson"—They say Smith stands on one side of the fence and looks to the other—afraid to get on, and yet not satisfied where he is—. . . your humble servant has taken a leap in*

the dark and between his lameness, his age and the weight he has to carry, he may jump far short of the mark—. . . Calhoun and Jackson have got into a quarrel—. . . I am afraid Calhoun is too weak to do us any good.

. . .<sup>56</sup>

Following the failure of Governor Ray to reappoint him, Judge Holman spent the next few years in semi-public retirement on Mt. Veraestau, but the man who had served the people of his community and state so faithfully for a score of years could not be expected to relinquish easily his interest in the public welfare. As the years passed, his fame grew rather than diminished and "his reputation as a jurist was second only to his popularity with the people."<sup>57</sup>

Veraestau had become one of the most celebrated homesteads in Indiana, and much of the important business of the state was transacted there. The old log homestead had long since been exchanged for a more pretentious abode. In 1831, friends of the judge persuaded him to emerge from his retirement and to seek election to the United States Senate to succeed his old friend, General James Noble, who had died in Washington. In a letter to "Brother Holman," Dennis Pennington, writing from his home in Corydon, expressed elation over Holman's candidacy and declared that "should life last, you will have my warmest support. . . . The Gov is out also, I am told. But I hope the Senate will never be disgraced by such a man. . . . I would advise you to attend the setting [*sic*] of the Supreme Court in May a few days, there will be the place for those that will be in opposition to you to lay their plans—I am fully of the opinion you will succeed."<sup>58</sup> In the election that year, Holman was defeated by John Tipton,<sup>59</sup> the legislature being strongly against Holman politically.<sup>60</sup>

Judge Holman was forewarned during that summer of the opposition which there might be against his election when the new legislature met. Writing from his home in Richmond, August 13, 1831, his friend, David Hoover, concluded that Holman

would feel some interest in Knowing who was Elected and who in all probability they would support for U. S. Senator. . . . William Steele, Henry Hoover, John Jones, and Richard Henderson are our Representa-



tives, and it is generally believed that Steele and Jones will favour the pretensions of Rariden, and as to the other two, he certainly will lose their votes. . . . It strikes me that there is some doubt of his holding out to be a candidate. I think he will manuver [*sic*] about as he did last session until he finds that he stands no chance of being elected and then back out. He has certainly lowered himself very much in this County during the past canvass in endeavoring to aid the pretensions of J. Test. Test certainly is as flat in this city as it is possible for any man to be. . . . Perhaps it would be best for you to pay some attention to Steele and Jones. And indeed to every other member especially when there is some doubt. . . .<sup>61</sup>

A rather optimistic note was struck in a letter addressed to Holman from John A. Farnham, writing from Jeffersonville on August 22, 1831, in which he maintained that "So far as the present complexion of our Legislature is concerned I think you have no cause of apprehension."<sup>62</sup>

Holman evidently lost no time in attempting to enlist support for his candidacy. That autumn he was very active throughout the state in the interest of his campaign, even going into the home districts of those who might oppose him. By early November he had completed his tour through the Wabash Valley, and on November 9 he wrote from Indianapolis to his son-in-law at Fort Wayne: "My prospects on the upper Wabash are not flattering if Tipton is a candidate, but I do not think he will be. In that case I shall beat Blake in the West, and I do not fear his doing anything in the South or East."<sup>63</sup>

As the vote in the legislature showed, however, Holman was mistaken about his opponents and their strength as well as his own chances of success. It is apparent from a letter written to Holman soon after his defeat that the Masonic Order had much influence in the election. The letter, which shows that Holman was not supported by its members, was written by his friend S. M. Levenworth, who declared:<sup>64</sup>

I have just heard the results of the Senatorial election & as I said to you when I saw you last it was a compleat [*sic*] Masonic election. Blake was the Mason Clay candidate but they would rather have a Clay man who is not a Mason as Blake lost Tipton gained the Clay party may be considered the Masonic party in this State the leading Masons are with them more than the Jackson party although nearly sufficient Masons with the Jacksonians to hold the office & when they can not get a Clay

Mason by goying [*sic*] over to the Jacksonians can get a Jackson Mason which suits them better than a man who is not a Mason, character, intelligence and ability are not the first inquiries in these days but is he a Mason if we cannot get a Mason from one of the political ranks take him from the other & this I believe is the reason you lost your election which I very much regret. . . . I think for the honor of the State & the protection of our rights religious & political we ought to unite all who do not belong to the craft & go in a body against them let the inquiry be is he honest has he tallents & intelegence will he oppose the intriegues & macinations of the craft. . . . Let those opposed to the craft have a secret understanding all over the State to support one another & keep it from the Masons. . . .<sup>65</sup>

In a lengthy letter written to Allen Hamilton of Fort Wayne, Holman gave his own account of the political manipulations during the election. "It was such a conflicting sum of intrigue and deception," he wrote, "that much of mysterious perplexity still hangs over it. And accounts were so confused and contradictory that I grew sick of the details & left Indianapolis in two days after the election was over." He remarked that Test had been talked of as a candidate until a day or two before the election and then had declined. "Rariden was kept in heart, by O. H. Smith & Wabash Jackson men who did not intend to support him," he declared. "Blake was also supported by a number of Jackson men who did not want him elected—they wanted to push him ahead of me at first," Holman said. As to his own support for Senator when the balloting occurred, Holman was not able to know who all his friends were. So many told him and his friends that they had voted for him, that he was at a loss "to select among them the number of votes I really got." He continued:

Tipton's conduct is involved in mystery. Some affirm that the precise course his friends took was arranged at the Supreme Court. Test says Rariden & Tipton made an express bargain to support each other; and there are some other matters that look the same way. On the other hand, Tipton's confidential friends as well as himself assured me at Logansport & at the time of the election that Tipton wished me elected. . . . It was said of Tipton and with his express sanction that he did not wish to be a candidate . . . but was afraid to say he would not suffer his name to be used for fear the Jackson party would all turn against him. I knew if I had to contend with Tipton I was in great danger of being beaten, and in fact had no hope of success. . . . Tipton I knew would get 16 Clay



votes. Some of them stood pledged to support him if he was a candidate, & others on the Wabash voted for him because he was a Wabash man. So that without eight or ten of the Jackson men I had no hope of success; and these I would have gotten if Boone and McCarty had been on the ground. But there was such an overwhelming Jackson force on the ground that they frightened Judah & compelled him to give way to Tipton & overawed Boone's & McCarty's friends into the support of Tipton. Besides this there were several violent opposers of religion in the Legislature & these to a man were against me. And Rariden when he failed himself did all in his power against me. Bassett is charged by some as having played on both sides between Tipton & me, but I have no doubt he did all in his power for me.<sup>66</sup>

Holman claimed that he had less regret over the result of the election than the great body of his friends. He would as a matter of choice remain quietly at home rather than have a seat in the Senate of the United States. He assured his son-in-law that no office of honor or profit could repay the "sickening feelings I endured while witnessing the corruption & duplicity that attended the senatorial canvass." He had done all that his friends had asked of him, and "there was no arrangement left untried that seemed to promise success." He was not fully certain as to his course in the future. He declared that there was "a powerful combination against the advocates of Temperance, Sunday Schools, & Bible & Tract Societies. This was against me in the Legislature & would be more so among the people." He stated further that

the rotation-in-office policy has spread through the whole community & those who have shared public office for a long time it is thought should give way to others. And the tide is now setting strongly in favor of young men. A man acts wisely in knowing the proper time when he should cease to struggle for public office. And my family, especially Richard, requires my attention at home. Look at the sons of most men who have filled high offices, & say whether it would not have conduced to the welfare of society & the happiness of their families if their fathers had devoted more time to the rearing up of their children. . . .<sup>67</sup>

For the next few years after he lost the senatorial election, Holman seems not to have been very ambitious for political honors. He loved to spend his time at Veraestau with his family, because his tastes "were eminently domestic and social, and, although so long on the bench, he was more devoted to the so-

ciety of friends than to the profession of law.”<sup>68</sup> His domestic contentment is shown in a letter which he wrote to his daughter and her husband. After relating some items of community interest, particularly in regard to a recent flood on the Ohio River he wrote:

I am now settled down for farming, listening however occasionally to the political . . . [*illegible*] abroad. Some of our Representation are very much dissatisfied with Senator Tipton. . . . I suspect from the general rumor that Tipton's race will not be a long one, but who will be his successor is doubtful. My own career must be left to time & circumstances. I feel far better on my farm & at my fireside than in canvassing for office.<sup>69</sup>

Holman was still interested in practicing law, however. On February 20, 1831, he renewed his license to practice and on May 2 of the same year Isaac Blackford, Stephen C. Stevens, and John McKinney of the Supreme Court of the state signed the license which allowed him to practice as an attorney and counselor at law in the superior and inferior courts within the state.<sup>70</sup>

It was in the summer of 1835 that Jesse Lynch Holman again took an active interest in political affairs. Benjamin Parke, the first federal district judge for Indiana,<sup>71</sup> died in that year, and Holman immediately sought an appointment to fill the vacancy. The annual salary of a thousand dollars probably appealed to him.<sup>72</sup> He wrote to numerous friends in Washington and elsewhere and particularly to William Hendricks, Amos Lane, Jonathan McCarty and John Tipton, begging them to intercede in his behalf with President Jackson.<sup>73</sup> At first there seemed to be no serious opposition to his appointment. During the recess of Congress, Jackson, on September 16, 1835 signed the commission which gave Holman the office until the end of the next session of Congress. He took the oath before Horace Bassett, a justice of the peace of Dearborn County, on October 8, 1835,<sup>74</sup> and his first court was held on November 30 of the same year.<sup>75</sup>

Holman was soon to realize, however, that the forces against his confirmation by the Senate were very powerful. Indeed it was feared that perhaps Jackson would not even send his nomination in to the Senate for confirmation. When Congress con-



vened, the fears of Holman and his friends were increased. In a letter which Amos Lane sent from Washington on December 19, he declared that Holman's opponents were charging that he was an anti-Jackson man, that he had opposed the various measures of the Administration, that he was "destitute of all the necessary qualifications for the office," and that he was "a fanatic on the subject of abolition."<sup>76</sup> As a matter of fact, Holman had cast his vote as a presidential elector in 1824 in favor of John Quincy Adams instead of Jackson,<sup>77</sup> and Holman's friend, Peter Brady, took him to task for his attitude toward Jackson.<sup>78</sup>

As for Holman's attitude toward slavery, it is true that he gave freedom to his wife's slaves when he removed to Indiana in 1811, but this was largely because of the prohibition of slavery in the Indiana Territory, and not so much because he held humanitarian sentiments toward the negroes. However, both he and his father were believers in eventual emancipation, at least theoretically.<sup>79</sup> His decision in the "Polly" case when he was on the Indiana Supreme Court has already been mentioned. But he was much more interested in the establishment of a colony in Africa for ex-slaves than he was in merely giving them their freedom. Indeed, he was a very active member of the American Colonization Society and presided over its organization meeting which was held in Indianapolis on November 4, 1829.<sup>80</sup> From this it appears that Holman was a moderate abolitionist, as the object of the society was "to aid in removing our colored population [after emancipation] with their own consent to the western coast of Africa & thereby to lessen if not cancel the numberless calamities that have been inflicted on that ill-fated region by the slave trade."<sup>81</sup>

On one occasion, Holman pleaded with the Board of the American Colonization Society in behalf of one Thomas Records and his family, so that they might be removed to Liberia. In reply to his request, the Board promised that Records and his family would be provided for

whenever a vessel shall be fitted out from New Orleans. As we have many applications from the Western & S. W. States, we shall, if prospered, in regard to means, dispatch an expedition from New Orleans in the

course of a few months. We shall enter his name upon our list of applicants, & will give you timely information whenever an opportunity may offer for his departure.<sup>82</sup>

Holman felt that colonization was the only salvation for the blacks. He felt they could never become a real part of American civilization. "The road to respectability is shut against them. No possible exertion can raise them to an equality with the whites," he declared.<sup>83</sup> He believed that if the black man were given all that constitutes human greatness, "he is still below the lowest of the whites." He was convinced that

a population so shiftless & consequently so illiterate & immoral will have a pernicious effect upon the whole community. . . . Wherever man degrades his brother, the pestilential broth of his degradation will infuse its poison through his own character & enjoyments. . . . We are therefore vitally interested in . . . removing the degraded so far that we shall be less affected by their degradation. . . . Interest therefore requiring their removal for our own benefit, & benevolence requires it for their's . . . & therefore wish to see the dark cloud, which slavery has thrown over our character, entirely dispersed & the last tinge of blood & oppression washed from our national escutcheon. . . . In this plan of colonizing the black on Liberia, we have a spacious field in which we can display our good will to man. . . .<sup>84</sup>

That Holman was not a fanatic on the subject of abolition is shown by a letter which was addressed to him by George H. Dunn in which are related some of the difficulties that the question had raised in Congress:

You have seen how exciting has become the subject of abolition. It has been somewhat smothered by the resolution passed by our house. But it breaks out every now & then, almost threatening the dissolution of our body. Something should be done by the moderates, before the ultras drive things to extremes. The west as yet, is neutral ground & most are looking to her for safety, & that she will stand forth the peace maker between South & North.

The Society are determined to make a trial & in casting about for the friends who will render the most efficient aid I have named you with others. And permit me to ask whether by proper exertions your brethren of the ministry could not be induced, generally, to bring this matter before their congregations in the course of the summer, & aid this Society with a collection & with a circulation of petitions calling upon Congress for aid. . . .<sup>85</sup>



Holman found that his chances for securing the federal judgeship were also in jeopardy because of the general practice of name-calling which was a favorite political sport even in those days. Party labels were applied rather indiscriminately and often they meant nothing at all. Much confusion resulted. Party relationship was subject to sudden and frequent changes, and men were known by the name of the man they followed at the moment. A critical contributor to one of the more prominent newspapers of that period thus gave his definitions for many of the phrases used in the campaigns:

Jackson Republican: an old Federalist who supports General Jackson for the office which he has gotten or hopes to get.

Whole-Hog Jackson Man: a fiery tempered person who has no opinion of his own, but votes, praises, censures or turns just as he is bidden by his county caucus.

Republican of Jefferson School: a man who always joins the strong party and swears he never changes.

Patriot: a man who can live by his own trade, but wants the public to support him.

Hero: anybody who has fought a duel.

Statesman: a man who knows how many States there are in the Union and can tell their names.

Federalist: everybody who is against my election.

The Party: five or six office-hunters in each county who teach the sovereigns how they ought to vote.

The Good Cause: my cause. My plan of getting into office. When I hear a man say he means to vote for a "tried Republican" I am astonished and disposed to ask him what he will have him tried for—treason, felony or breach of the peace?

When the new-fangled doctrine of nullification shall be attempted to be put into practice we shall no doubt see many "tried Republicans" and not a few of them condemned and executed.<sup>86</sup>

With such confusion in politics it is little wonder that Holman found much opposition to his appointment as federal judge. Those who were opposed to him seemed to have such influence over the President that the chances of his sending Holman's nomination before the Senate began to appear less hopeful, and friends of the judge urged that he visit Washington in his own behalf. On January 18, 1836, Holman set out for the Capital. After much delay en route, particularly due to a very serious accident in the mountains of Maryland when the stage in which

he was riding upset,<sup>87</sup> he arrived in Washington late. It was on February 10 that he wrote his first letter from Washington. He soon learned of the political bickering in and out of Congress and concluded that the opposition was more against his friends than himself personally. He found the Indiana delegation in Congress very much at odds with one another. Finally, he had an interview with President Jackson himself who received him very cordially. Of his visit with the President, Holman wrote:

I was fortunate to find him alone. He conversed freely on a great variety of subjects. Talked some time on the subject of my appointment, & the opposition that was got up against me. . . . He mentioned the charge of abolition, . . . which I had answered in several letters, which I had shown him. I satisfied him completely on that subject, & especially by repeating my decision in the first Negro case I acted on a few days after I rec'd my commission, & which I gave a certificate for removal of the slave to Kentucky. I stated the principles upon which I decided. It gave him entire satisfaction & . . . the Gen'l was particularly pleased with my decision . . .<sup>88</sup>

Jackson finally sent Holman's name in to the Senate and the appointment was confirmed unanimously on March 29, 1836.<sup>89</sup> The certificate of appointment, signed by William Forsyth, Secretary of State, is dated April 2, 1836.<sup>90</sup> This position Holman held until his death at Veraestau on March 28, 1842, but the last day he sat on the bench was November 17, 1841.<sup>91</sup> During these seven years he was, in the opinion of Oliver H. Smith, a "first rate judge; patient, courteous, and kind in the discharge of his official duties."<sup>92</sup>

A special memorial service was held for Holman on May 17, 1842,<sup>93</sup> in the courtroom in Indianapolis, on which occasion, Associate Justice John McLean of the United States Supreme Court was present. In his tribute to the deceased, Justice McLean said:

My acquaintance with him was not long, but it was long enough to impress me deeply with his high merit as a man and public officer. His mind was sound, discriminating, and practical. Of his legal research and acumen, he has left enduring evidence. But what most excited my admiration, was his singleness of heart;—he had no motive but to discharge his public duty uprightly. . . . He has left behind him the influence of a high moral example. This will be widely felt; and its salutary effects cannot be lost on society.<sup>94</sup>



At the same time resolutions were unanimously adopted to the effect that "the members of this Bar feel with deep sensibility the loss which the profession and the country have sustained in the death of the Hon. Jesse L. Holman;" that they "cherish the highest respect for the deceased, not merely as a Jurist, but as a man and a Christian of varied and useful talent and ability, and of purity and uprightness of character, in all the diversified scenes of life;" that they wear the badge of mourning for thirty days; and that the Hon. Isaac Blackford be requested to pronounce a discourse before the Bar during the next term of court "upon the life, character, and virtues of the deceased."<sup>95</sup> Such was their opinion of a man, wrote Horace Bassett, "who stands before the country without a rival as a Jurist, a Christian Statesman without reproach, of one of whom it may truly be said, 'He is one of Nature's noblemen.'"<sup>96</sup>

But Jesse Lynch Holman was known not only through his public services as a state and national jurist. During the thirty years he had been a resident of Indiana, he had devoted himself to many activities for the benefit of his fellow-citizens far and near. About four years after he came into Indiana, the territorial legislature approved an act, December 26, 1815, authorizing the erection of a bridge over Hogan Creek, in the vicinity of Decatur, Dearborn County. Decatur was the original name of the town of Aurora. Holman, with Robert Wright, Thomas P. Metcalf, Caleb Hayes, and Joseph E. Milburn, were named incorporators, and were

authorized to raise a sum of money not exceeding 3000 dollars in shares of 25 dollars each, for the purpose of erecting a Bridge over Hogan Creek, near its junction with the Ohio River, and for that purpose may open, or cause to be opened, books for subscriptions, in such time, place, and manner, as they may appoint, . . . [and the commissioners and subscribers] are hereby declared a body politic and corporate, by the name and style of the Decatur Bridge Company. . . .<sup>97</sup>

It was in this same year that Holman advertised a sale of lots to be held at Decatur on September 4, 1815. One advertisement appeared in the Lexington, Kentucky, *Western Eagle* on August 12, and evidently it was expected that it would induce many Kentuckians to cross into Indiana. The notice mentioned the

many advantages of the new town, located about seven miles from the mouth of the Great Miami River, in a "fertile and populous country, rapidly increasing in improvements," located on a "commanding eminence, of easy access from the Ohio," and the fact that it was "on the nearest route from the settlements of the Whitewater to Vevay and Port William, and also from Cincinnati to Vincennes and St. Louis." In a popular traveler's guide of 1819, it was said that "this town has a fine prospect of the meanderings of the creek and the river; and is accommodated with as good a harbor for boats, as any place between Pittsburgh and the Mississippi; a strong eddy from the Ohio putting into the creek, which exceeds 15 feet in depth at all stages of water."<sup>98</sup>

When Holman advertised the sale of lots at Decatur, the village was just about ten years old. The original plat contained about 206 lots together with about twelve lots for six public squares. Charles Vattier of Cincinnati, Ohio, had entered the region bordering on the Ohio River on September 18, 1804. Holman himself helped to lay out the town in 1819. At that time he was trustee for the "Aurora Association for Internal Improvements," a group of about twenty men residing in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana, organized for the purpose of laying out the town. At the first meeting of the Association, Holman was chosen president and the legal title of the land was vested in him. It was decided that "the company proceed by themselves or their directors to lay out a town, to build an ox saw-mill and gristmill, a bridge across Hogan Creek, a warehouse or such other improvements as they may judge proper."<sup>99</sup> The land, except for a small reservation at Hogan Creek, was conveyed to Holman, in trust for the Association, on January 14, 1819, and "the original plat of the town was acknowledged by Mr. Holman as trustee, before James Dill, recorder of the county, on January 30, 1819, and recorded the same day."<sup>100</sup> Holman resigned as director, trustee, and treasurer of the Association on October 24, 1822, because of his duties on the Supreme Court. He was thanked by the Association for the "ability, wisdom, impartiality and integrity with which he managed the concerns of the company."<sup>101</sup>



Some idea of the early struggles of the new community may be gained from the following:

The price [originally] agreed to be paid . . . [for the land] was \$20,000, and the stock divided into shares of \$100 each, one of which was retained by Vattier by the terms of the conveyance. The lots were sold mostly on credit, and at very high prices, and for three or four years a great deal of public attention was given to the enterprise, and quite a flourishing little village was built up, but at that time there was but little emigration westward, great scarcity of money, and few lots were paid for, and many of them were forfeited to the Association. The year 1836 is the date at which the steady and substantial growth of the town is to be fixed. In 1848, the town was incorporated as a city by the Legislature, by an act . . . ratified by the citizens at a public meeting.<sup>102</sup>

According to tradition, because of the jealousy between the new town and the thriving community of Rising Sun, nine miles downstream, Holman decided to change the name from Decatur to Aurora, as "the Aurora comes before the Rising Sun." The latter town had been growing rather rapidly, and as early as 1817 it contained thirty or forty houses, with a post office and a "floating mill anchored abreast of the town." It was expected that it would become "a place of considerable trade."<sup>103</sup>

From this time until his death in 1842, Judge Holman was frequently in the lead in every project for community betterment. The encouragement of religious and educational movements was one of his major interests. "He entered with a rare boldness and energy, into all the benevolent movements of the day," Bassett declared. "All found in him a willing and able advocate."<sup>104</sup> He was one of the leading champions of a library in the town of Aurora. Largely by his efforts the founders of the town made provisions for public schools by setting aside certain lands for school purposes. Through his encouragement, the town fathers made a "large and liberal donation . . . including 'Seminary Square', to found a Seminary of learning, and among the first educational institutions incorporated in the state was the Aurora Seminary."<sup>105</sup> In 1826, Judge Holman induced the Reverend Lucius Alden, a Presbyterian clergyman and scholar of Boston, to come out and conduct the school.<sup>106</sup> In the fall of 1830, Alden returned to Boston wearing "a full suit of

blue jeans, woven by Mrs. Judge Holman, on the old handloom."<sup>107</sup>

In 1832, Holman was elected superintendent of the Dearborn County schools.<sup>108</sup> Through his efforts another academy was started two years later, and it had the backing of the celebrated missionary worker, Isaac McCoy. His brother John McCoy wrote to his son William from Charlestown, Indiana, on September 17, 1834: "We have just recd. a communication from Judge Holeman [*sic*] of Aurora that there will soon be an academy [*sic*] or County Seminary started in his county, which may possibly give Isaac [not the missionary] a chance as their teacher, altho this is entirely uncertain. . . ."<sup>109</sup>

Judge Holman's interest in educational and cultural affairs is further demonstrated by his connection with the Indiana Historical Society. In the minutes of the first meeting of the Society, held at the courthouse in Indianapolis on December 11, 1830, it was resolved to form the "Historical Society of Indiana." A committee of seven was appointed for the purpose of drafting a constitution for the Society. This committee was composed of John H. Farnham, Jesse L. Holman, Jeremiah Sullivan, Isaac Blackford, William C. Linton, James Whitcomb, and David Wallace.<sup>110</sup>

At a meeting of the Society four days later, Benjamin Parke, of Salem, was elected the first president, and the three judges of the Supreme Court were elected as vice-presidents, with Isaac Blackford of Knox County as first vice-president, Jesse L. Holman of Dearborn as second vice-president, and James Scott of Clark as third vice-president. On motion of Judge Holman, it was resolved that the annual lectures of the Society should deal with:

1. The history of the Indian tribes within the state.
2. The civil and political history of the state from its earliest settlement.
3. Ancient remains and natural curiosities within the state.
4. The natural history of the state embracing its geology, mineralogy and botany, its soil productions, and climate, its animals, birds and fishes.<sup>111</sup>

Judge Holman served as second vice-president of the Society from 1830 to 1835.<sup>112</sup>



Holman performed great service in connection with the Baptist denomination in Indiana. From his early life his mind was directed to the subject of religion. His friend, Horace Bassett, said of Holman's religious life:

He sought and obtained the forgiveness of his sins, and united himself with the Baptist Church, of which he soon became an ornament, and one of its most useful members.

Constitutionally ardent in his temperment [*sic*] his religious feelings were at all times and under all circumstances, manifested with a boldness and consistancy of character, that satisfied everyone that he was not ashamed of the Cross of Christ. That the honor of his Saviour, and the salvation of souls, were the ruling motives of his heart.<sup>113</sup>

Holman was one of a group of elders and brethren which met at Aurora on February 26, 1820, for the purpose of organizing a Baptist church there. He was chosen the clerk of the meeting. The first services were conducted in a log house which had been built originally for a private residence, but which was afterwards used as a schoolhouse, and by all denominations of Christians for church purposes, "as occasion might require."<sup>114</sup> This was the custom in those days, as there were no church buildings, and the meetings were usually held in private homes or schoolhouses. An interesting description of the religious picture is given in the following terms:

The people did not go to church to display their finery. The men at these private home meetings wore jeans, while the women wore flannel. A calico dress was a rarity indeed. The preachers were muscular Christians, who pointed men to salvation through love of their race rather than because they received a good salary for doing so. Their salaries were but \$50 to \$75, and on these meager sums they endured great hardships with Christian fortitude. Often they sacrificed their lives in their work.<sup>115</sup>

It is said that Holman pledged five times as much for the support of its first pastor, as any other member of the Aurora church.<sup>116</sup> Largely through his encouragement, the Baptists of Aurora before the end of their first decade as an organized church, built the first meetinghouse in the town. It was constructed of brick and it became famous as the church in which Lorenzo Dow preached. It was here that the first session of the first United States Bankrupt Court was held. Judge Holman

presided over this court just before his death in 1842. The court was held here because Holman was too ill to journey to Indianapolis to transact the necessary business of the court,<sup>117</sup> and its session was attended by insolvent debtors from the western country.<sup>118</sup>

It was in 1834 that the dream of his life was realized. At that time the church at Aurora voted unanimously "to invite a council to consider the propriety of setting apart to the ministry Jesse L. Holman."<sup>119</sup> He served the Aurora church from then until his death without salary, preaching regularly when not away on public duty. It is said that even

while traveling the judicial circuit it was no unusual thing for him to address his fellow-citizens on Bible operations, missions, Sabbath-schools, general education, and temperance. So consistent and earnest was his life that there seemed no incongruity, but rather a singular harmony in his two offices of judge and minister.<sup>120</sup>

Holman's services as pastor of the Aurora church more than met the expectations of his congregation and the church grew and prospered under his leadership. Men were always glad to hear him preach.<sup>121</sup>

Preaching, however, was not the only avenue by which Holman carried on his religious activities. He was a leader in many of the new religious movements of the day. He earnestly supported every measure which promised the elevation and improvement of mankind.<sup>122</sup> He was particularly interested in the missionary and Sunday-school movements which were beginning to take shape in Indiana. Sunday schools were not popular in those days in the western country. Many pious folk looked upon them as the desecration of God's house. As a result they were usually promoted as undenominational enterprises.<sup>123</sup>

A Union Sunday school, organized by Holman in 1824, is believed to be the first in the state. He served as its superintendent until his death.<sup>124</sup> During his travels throughout the state he distributed many religious books and tracts.<sup>125</sup> He established cooperating Bible societies in many places in the country and endeavored to provide every destitute family within his county with a copy of the Scriptures.<sup>126</sup> It was largely through these contacts with the people that Holman became one of the most



highly respected and best-loved men in the state.<sup>127</sup> One who knew him well said:

We have often been amused when traveling through the country, to hear honest-minded farmers speak of Judge Holman, and with what lively recollections they would refer to his visits, giving day and date; and often have we heard the remark that this (referring to some accident or occurrence) took place the fall after Judge Holman was here, or that that happened a year or two years after Judge Holman visited us and stopped over night—making his visits an era or important period in the history of the family.<sup>128</sup>

For many years Holman was vice-president of the American Sabbath School Union and was president of the Western Baptist Publication and Sabbath School Society.<sup>129</sup> Even while he was a member of the state Supreme Court, he was taking an active interest in religious affairs. As a member of the Western Sunday School Board of Agency, he supervised the work of all of its agents who were sent into Indiana. He was authorized to control all the societies formed by agents in connection with the Board.<sup>130</sup> It was the general policy of such Boards to set up local agencies where practicable, and Holman was considered the best qualified man in the state for the duty of supervising such local activities.<sup>131</sup>

After Holman had been relieved of his duties on the Supreme Court of the state, he entered wholeheartedly into religious work.<sup>132</sup> In 1831, he helped establish an Indiana Bible Society. Nearly four hundred volumes of the Scriptures were distributed by this Society in the first year. One-fourth of this cost was paid by Holman.<sup>133</sup>

The attitude of Holman on the whole question of Sunday schools was advanced in an address which he made on the subject. In refuting the arguments against such schools, he compared them to the common schools of the day. He declared that the best teachers of the public schools were also found in the Sunday schools and said that the one was complementary to the other. He praised the inexpensiveness of the Sunday schools because of the voluntary labor of the teachers. He hailed the movement as a "powerful guarantee of civil and religious liberty." He attempted to prove that the Sunday schools were

powerful factors in shaping the destinies of a republican government.<sup>134</sup>

So strongly did Holman feel on the whole Sunday school question that he constantly urged his friends and relatives to foster schools in their communities. In a letter to the Allen Hamiltons at Fort Wayne, he urged them to sponsor a Sabbath school there:

Even if you labored under difficulties at first, yet by perseverance you would be enabled to succeed. If your school was but small at first, it would still be a gratification to promote the moral interest of even a few children, & it would give something of the appearance of a Sabbath among you. There is very great danger, my dear children, in being without Sabbath privileges. . . . But if you had no other show of a Sabbath, than a Sabbath-School, it would enable you to bear more strongly in mind that there is an ever-lasting Sabbath above which should be the first and main pursuit of every rational being. I have from experience become convinced that almost any village or neighborhood may support a Sunday-School, & continue it with increasing advantage. I should be much gratified to hear that you were both engaged so far as you may have opportunity in promoting one of these important nurseries of morality and religion.<sup>135</sup>

In the early days, the Baptists of Indiana were not enthusiastic about supporting missions, but Holman was always a warm and consistent friend of such activity. His Aurora church became the headquarters for missionary activities.<sup>136</sup> He was one of the first men in the state to acclaim the missionary enterprise, at the Laughery Baptist Association in 1818.<sup>137</sup> He firmly supported the activities of Isaac McCoy,<sup>138</sup> one of the first missionaries to the Indians. As early as 1820 he urged the forming of a state organization for the support of this work, but this was postponed due to the great opposition aroused by the Baptist churches against all benevolences.<sup>139</sup> The need for such a program was proclaimed in the following terms:

[If] Christians who now oppose missions as useless could see the wretched situation of these children of the forest and witness their gratitude in Receiving Cloathes to Keep them warm and could hear some of them . . . singing, "Jesus sought me when a stranger," [they] would be ashamed of their opposition and would be willing to give a small part of what the lord has bestowed upon them. . . . Considerable might be saved . . . even in these hard times by avoiding some of the luxuries which



Christians are in the habit of making use of, for instance let every Christian in the Western Country use one gallon less of ardent Spirits in his family in the Course of the Year and apply the savings to the Support of the Gospel in some Way how much good might be Done. . . . Could one or two pious judicious Baptist preachers be supported to travel and preach through the new settlements of Indiana where are many scattered Brethren and small Churches (some almost without Discipline), much good might be Done. . . . Can not some means be devised by uniting our Brethren of this state in some measure of the Kind?<sup>140</sup>

Because of the many differences of opinion among the Baptists of Indiana in the early 'Thirties, it was decided to form a General Association or State Baptist Convention, to the meetings of which the various local associations might send delegates to discuss their problems. Forty-one met at the Brandywine church in Shelby County on April 26, 1833. They came from fifteen counties and represented about twenty different churches. Judge Holman was chosen the moderator and prepared the constitution for the state organization.<sup>141</sup> For five years Holman served as president.<sup>142</sup> One of the major problems to come before this new body was that of general education among the Baptists of the state, especially among its ministry. There was wide-spread opposition throughout Indiana to an educated ministry. A more progressive group believed that poor scholastic attainments of their ministers were the cause of their opposition to benevolent activities. Holman, like a few of the others who brought about the birth of the state convention, insisted that steps should be taken immediately to launch an educational project, but the majority considered it unwise to hamper in this way the growing spirit of co-operation among the Baptists.<sup>143</sup>

In spite of considerable opposition, however, the Indiana Baptist Education Society was organized at Indianapolis on June 5, 1834,<sup>144</sup> and a constitution was adopted in January, 1835. The Society proposed "to promote sound literature and sciences including the literary and theological education of pious young men for the ministry, by establishing one or more seminaries and assisting worthy young men in attendance."<sup>145</sup> The town of Franklin was chosen as the location for the Indiana Manual Labor Institute, and thirty-five trustees were selected to administer the affairs of the school and to report annually to the In-

diana Education Society. Holman was named as one of the trustees. He served as vice-president from 1835 to 1839, and as president from 1839 until his death in 1842.<sup>146</sup>

Holman was the author of the school's first constitution designed "to promote a more general knowledge of Science, Literature, and Biblical criticism, throughout the Baptist connection in Indiana." On January 4, 1837, Holman was "respectfully invited to accept the office of Principal . . . , and that he devote so much of his time and attention to this Institute as will not materially interfere with the duties of the office of Judge of the United States District Court."<sup>147</sup> Holman declined the position because of his judicial duties. Nevertheless, he probably did more than any other person to support the school in its early years through material and other contributions. His death was a real loss to the Baptist constituency of the state.

Holman's interest in higher education was not confined to the Baptist college at Franklin. While the records are not particularly clear, it appears that he should be considered as one of the founders of Indiana College, which later became Indiana University. The college itself had been established in 1828, and Holman was appointed a member of the Board of Visitors.<sup>148</sup> When the college became a university on February 15, 1838, Holman was named a member of its Board of Trustees.<sup>149</sup>

In his private life, Jesse Lynch Holman was the personification of those virtues which he attempted to inculcate in others. He was honest, and worked for the welfare of the community. It is said that "he had a peculiar faculty of impressing his own moral feelings upon all with whom he came in contact. No one doubted the purity of his heart, and as his public and private character was without spot or blemish, all were ready to acquiesce in his views."<sup>150</sup> His discriminating mind and religious zeal left a wide and extended influence not only in the whole community where he was personally known, but throughout the state as well.

Holman believed that nothing should be done which would bring hurt or sorrow to another. He felt that individuals owed certain duties to society, and when his daughter Emerine married Allen Hamilton of Fort Wayne, one of his first letters to the young couple emphasized that point of view:



We should endeavor to live & maintain such a character that our standing in society will not depend on external circumstances. . . . But we are not living to ourselves. . . . There are various institutions of a public nature that it is our duty to support, besides many private demands will be made upon us. . . . Above all this we should be exemplary in the matter [of economy], we should in all our affairs endeavor rather to . . . [illegible]. . . . Now I think there is such a thing as being real benefactors to society, by living a little below the highest standard, even when we are able to come up to it—it renders others better contented with their condition, and so far as it has any influence it prevents others from striving to make a more splendid appearance. You have both had many lessons of economy & I trust that you will practice them in all your concerns however small. . . .<sup>151</sup>

Holman died at Veraestau on March 28, 1842, in his fifty-eighth year, mourned by every man, woman and child in the surrounding country. He left behind him his widow and six children, Emerine, Eliza, William Steele, Lucy, Mary Anne and Jesse Lynch.<sup>152</sup> Another son, Richard Henry, had died at Veraestau on December 27, 1841, after an extended illness.<sup>153</sup> Although an attack of pleurisy had weakened his constitution, it was probably grief over this tragedy which hastened the father's death. Jesse Lynch Holman had been truly a kind husband and an affectionate father. But he was also a great citizen. It has been said that at the time of his death, "one could look down from Veraestau and see fields of grain on every side, three busy towns along the river and the wilderness truly beginning to blossom as the rose. And much of this prosperity was due to Jesse Lynch Holman."<sup>154</sup>

Perhaps no greater tribute could be paid him than that contained in the following paragraph:

[He was] a student, a lover of nature, a lover of books, a preacher of the gospel. Taking him all in all, he was a very remarkable man—a strong, serious, quiet, modest, manly, frank, kind and thoughtful man. A good writer, a good speaker, pleasant and entertaining in conversation and observant of all his duties as a neighbor and citizen. He was a man of stout frame, a little inclined to stoop, with a head ample and drooping forward, as if in thought, with large, plain, regular and ample features, on which were stamped the kind and generous impulses of his nature. He passed through life without an enemy and without shirking a duty.<sup>155</sup>

## PART II

### WILLIAM STEELE HOLMAN

#### CHAPTER III

#### EARLY POLITICAL CAREER

WHEN JESSE LYNCH HOLMAN died on March 28, 1842, the Holman influence did not come to an end. Veraestau was to see more glorious days ahead, and another Holman was destined to play a very significant part in the affairs of the state and nation. William Steele Holman followed in the political footsteps of his father and, until almost the close of the nineteenth century, was constantly found contributing his abilities and talents to the public service.

Born on September 6, 1822, at Veraestau, the ancestral homestead, near Aurora, Indiana, William Steele Holman was surrounded with the hardships and privations of a pioneer life.<sup>1</sup> The hills overlooking the Ohio River were still a wilderness. There were only scattered villages in the region, and schools and churches were in their infancy. But young Holman, like the other pioneer boys of southern Indiana, came from hardy stock, and

rude though their surroundings, scant their education, many of them uncultured in their manner and uncouth in their attire, grew up a God-fearing, law-abiding, patriotic community of American citizens, loving their country and its institutions with a more fervid devotion than many of those who, in the older settled parts of our country, were surrounded with the advantages of education and refinement. The immediate vicinity of his home was one which had been made rich in anecdote and tradition by the heroism and fortitude of many a band of devoted pioneers who had offered up their lives in the border warfare against the dusky savages. . . .<sup>2</sup>

It was under the hardships and vicissitudes of pioneer life that Holman passed his early days. He had inherited from his able



father and his cultured mother a healthy body and a sound, vigorous mind. He early learned those lessons of industry and frugality which were to be the dominating characteristics of his public as well as of his private life. From his parents also he had inherited those traits of character which made him one of the trusted and prominent men of his time. His boyhood was not unlike that of his neighbors. He attended the common school of the village of Aurora, about a mile and a half from his home, and early gained an appreciation of literature which aided him in his later life.

When he was sixteen years of age, William S. Holman entered the Baptist Manual Labor Institute at Franklin, Indiana, which his father had been largely instrumental in establishing two or three years before. In fact, William was one of the first students in the new school. In 1838, at the close of the first year of instruction, an "Exhibition" was held on the campus. William was "the outstanding performer on this occasion."<sup>3</sup> Two years later he left the institution.<sup>4</sup>

Like many young men of his day, Holman taught school for a short period in his immediate neighborhood. He also read and studied law under the instruction of his father. When he was about twenty-one years old, in 1843, he was admitted to the Dearborn County bar, and in the same year he received the rare distinction, for one so young, of election to the position of probate judge of the county; this office he held until 1846.<sup>5</sup> From 1847 to 1849, he served his county in the position which now corresponds to that of prosecuting attorney.<sup>6</sup>

Some years later, Judge W. S. Holman related an anecdote to Judge Omar F. Roberts, regarding his first campaign for public favor, the office of probate judge. Two partial friends, he said, had brought him to the front as a candidate for the probate judgeship. The diffidence of youth strongly inclined him to decline the candidacy. He consulted his mother, who always encouraged him in any laudable ambition. She believed that he could be elected, and she advised him, not for one moment to think of declining the race, but, instead, to enter at once upon a vigorous personal canvass. Her counsel determined his action. Mounted upon an old family charger, he traversed the valleys, rode over the hills, and followed the byways and paths

through the forests of Dearborn County. He visited the log cabins of the early settlers; walked and talked with the husbandman in the field and at the plow; called on the woodsman in the forest; and talked to the traveler by the wayside. The procedure elicited the good-will of men of all parties, made him many friends, and won votes in the election.<sup>7</sup>

In 1843 Holman married Miss Abigail Knapp, a young woman of high character and liberal attainments.<sup>8</sup> To this union five children were born: Rhoda Elizabeth, who married Leslie Fletcher; William Steele, Jr.; Paul; Pamela, who married Frederick Harvey; and Maude, who died when she was about twelve years old.<sup>9</sup>

Now a prominent lawyer, it was not long before Holman received other honors. In 1850, he was named a senatorial delegate to the state convention called to revise the Indiana constitution.

The Constitution of 1816 had provided that there should be a poll every twelve years when the qualified voters of the state should express by vote whether or not they were in favor of calling a convention.<sup>10</sup> It was the generally accepted theory that one generation had no moral or legal right to impose its will on future generations through constitutional limitations.<sup>11</sup> The constitutional convention was looked upon as a sure safeguard for democracy.<sup>12</sup> Yet, under the constitutional provision, several unsuccessful attempts to call such a convention had been made after 1816.

Throughout the years there had been much opposition to the calling of a constitutional convention. The Democrats as a rule favored it, but the Whigs contended that a change in the fundamental law should not be made "for trivial causes." They insisted that such a change should be made only "to abrogate some great wrong." Frequent changes, they held, impaired "the respect in which a constitution, to be valuable, ought to be held by the people."<sup>13</sup> George W. Julian spoke for this group when he said in 1847: "The people of Indiana are attached to their constitution. It is the work of their forefathers. Under it for thirty years they have enjoyed a degree of prosperity unsurpassed by any State in the Union."<sup>14</sup>

In other quarters, there was a growing feeling that the state



had outgrown the Constitution of 1816. The work of the General Assembly under it was greatly criticized, due mainly to the many laws for internal improvements which had brought the state under a heavy indebtedness without promoting the general welfare of the state. The legislators themselves, due to their indifference, did not help matters much. Special and local laws were enacted for various petty projects.<sup>15</sup> The judiciary and executive departments also were attacked by those wishing a change in the fundamental law.<sup>16</sup>

Governor James Whitcomb gradually yielded to the growing agitation for a constitutional convention. In his annual message to the Assembly on January 11, 1848, he recommended that the question of calling a constitutional convention be submitted to the voters. A law making the necessary provision was enacted and approved on January 15, 1849.<sup>17</sup> In the election of August 6, 81,500 votes were cast in favor of the convention, and 57,418 opposed. The entire vote of the state was 149,774. The next Assembly was called upon to district the state for the election of delegates and fix the time for their meeting. Governor Paris C. Dunning urged that the legislators "divest themselves of all party predilections" and make such an apportionment as would "insure to the people of the State, irrespective of parties, a full and fair representation in that body."<sup>18</sup>

On January 18, 1850, Governor Dunning signed the act calling for the meeting of the convention. It was provided that 150 delegates, 50 from the senatorial districts and 100 from the representative districts, be chosen at the August election, to meet on the first Monday of October, 1850, to revise, amend, or "new-model" the Constitution. The draft of the complete constitution was to be submitted to the next General Assembly for approval or rejection. The sum of \$40,000 was appropriated to defray the expenses of the convention,<sup>19</sup> and the governor, auditor, and treasurer of the state were authorized to provide suitable accommodations for the delegates either in the hall of the lower house of the General Assembly, or in the Masonic Hall, or in some other suitable building.<sup>20</sup>

There was little interest displayed in the campaign to elect delegates to the convention. The more public-spirited men of all parties hoped to eliminate political considerations in the se-

lection of delegates, but this was impossible, as the election of delegates took place at the same time as the election of members of the Assembly. As a result, the convention was overwhelmingly Democratic. The delegates from senatorial districts were made up of thirty-three Democrats and seventeen Whigs, and the delegates from representative districts included sixty-two Democrats and fifty-five Whigs in all.<sup>21</sup> This was practically the same political lineup as the new General Assembly. The 150 delegates were, however, a fairly representative group of men. In an editorial on October 7, 1850, the *Indianapolis Journal*, a staunch Whig paper, remarked that,

From the character of the delegates elected, and the spirit which seems to animate them, we feel justified in predicting that they will assume those duties with a determination to act in such manner as will secure to the people of the State a Constitution under which all their rights will be amply protected and their prosperity and happiness insured as far as it is possible to do.<sup>22</sup>

The gathering was not without men of ability and possibilities for future greatness. Mention of a few names of delegates will indicate the caliber of the members. Robert Dale Owen, Alvin P. Hovey, Thomas A. Hendricks, William Steele Holman, Schuyler Colfax, and Horace P. Biddle were among its most distinguished members, but they were all young and inexperienced men at this time. Others who were already widely known were Thomas D. Walpole, Abel C. Pepper, Daniel Kelso, James G. Reed, David Kilgore, Ross Smiley, Michael G. Bright, William M. Dunn, George W. Carr, David Wallace, Jacob Page Chapman, James Rariden, and John I. Morrison.

Seventy-five of the delegates had served in the General Assembly at one time or another, thirteen of them in the previous session. Twenty-five more were to use their experience in the convention as a stepping-stone to later legislative careers. Fourteen had served in the national Congress, one had been governor and two later became governors. There were seven well-known editors in the group, three of them from Indianapolis, but the great lawyers of the state were not present. There seemed to be a widespread disdain of educated men at this time; only five or six delegates were college graduates, three of them from



the state university.<sup>23</sup> This is not surprising, for it was an age when many of the western leaders were self-made men, and many of those who went to college did not go on to graduation.

The delegates to the constitutional convention assembled in the hall of the House of Representatives in Indianapolis at ten o'clock on the morning of October 7, 1850. They were called to order by Secretary of State Charles H. Test who presided until a president was elected. The roll call was taken, and the oath to support the Constitution of the United States, and, to the best of their ability respectively, to perform the duties of the office as delegates to the convention, was administered by the Hon. Isaac Blackford, a judge of the supreme court of the state.<sup>24</sup> William S. Holman, who lived in Dearborn County, was one of the delegates from a senatorial district of southeastern Indiana. The convention speedily proceeded to perfect its organization. George W. Carr from Lawrence County, who had been speaker of the house during the last two preceding sessions of the General Assembly, was elected president.<sup>25</sup> William H. English, of Scott County, who was not a delegate, was made the secretary.<sup>26</sup>

William S. Holman played a leading role in the work of the convention, although he did not always vote with the majority. An examination of the resolutions which he introduced, many of which were adopted, shows his influence on the deliberations and spirit of the convention. He was one of the most energetic, able, and useful members. A local paper described him as being in the prime of life, his mind active, penetrating and broad, and quick to perceive the merits and demerits of all the propositions brought up, and declared that many of the reforms embraced in the new constitution were the product of his brain and pen, but few of which were rejected.<sup>27</sup>

Five days after the convention assembled, Holman submitted a resolution, which was laid upon the table by consent, but it shows clearly the frame of mind of the young lawyer:

1. That the legitimate object of a Constitution is to declare the natural and inherent rights of the citizen, to fix and establish the several departments of government, and declare and limit the powers to be exercised by each.
2. That no subject of a merely legislative character and not funda-

mental in its nature, should be engrafted on the Constitution.

3. That it is anti-republican to restrain the exercise of the public will through the legislature by unnecessary restraints on the legislative department of Government.<sup>28</sup>

Holman's legal ability was early recognized in the convention. He was appointed a member of the standing committee on the practice of the law and law reform.<sup>29</sup> He was, at this time, still two years short of being thirty years of age.

One of the rather interesting debates which took place in the convention concerned the property rights of married women. Report Number IV, which was submitted to the convention on October 29,<sup>30</sup> provided that

Women hereafter married in this State shall have the right to acquire and possess property to their sole use and disposal; and laws shall be passed securing to them, under equitable conditions, all property, real and personal, whether owned by them before marriage, or acquired afterwards by purchase, gift, descent, or in any other way, and also providing for the registration of the wife's separate property.

Another section contained the provision that

Laws shall be passed securing to women now married, the right to all property hereafter to be acquired by them, in every case in which such married women, in conjunction with their husbands, shall file for record, in the recorder's office of the county in which they shall reside, a declaration, duly attested, expressing the desire of the parties to come under the provision of such law.<sup>31</sup>

Robert Dale Owen, a delegate from Posey County, strongly advocated that the convention adopt these two sections. He had previously introduced them in the form of a resolution.<sup>32</sup> In a lengthy speech on November 13, Owen expressed the conviction that no subject of greater importance had so far been discussed in the convention, and said that "No subject of greater importance will engage our attention, till we close our labors and go hence." He deplored the fact that half the citizens of the state were denied "the right of acquiring, possessing, protecting property . . . heretofore declared to be natural, inherent, inalienable . . . ." He spoke out vehemently against the doctrine of common law as it regarded the property of married women in that day,



and adverted in general terms to the consequences of that doctrine.<sup>33</sup>

According to Owen's reasoning:

The change embodied in the sections now under discussion is radical but it is gradual also. It affects marriages hereafter contracted, and applies to existing marriages only in case the parties record their desire to come under its provisions. Thus, it will not too rudely jar on present usages and existing interests.<sup>34</sup>

The arguments of Owen were opposed by Holman who moved to strike out the two sections and insert the following:

Every married woman shall have the right to the exclusive use and benefit of all real estate, and every interest therein of which she may be seized or possessed at the time of the marriage, or of which she may become seized or possessed at any time during the coverture by devise, or descent, or in any manner other than by gift from her husband in fraud of third persons; and laws shall be passed effectually securing to the wife on equitable principles, the use, issues and profits of her separate property, and a just interest in her husband's estate, in the event of the dissolution of the marriage contract by the death of the husband or otherwise.<sup>35</sup>

Holman feared that the change advocated by Owen would seriously affect the family relationship. In an address before the convention on November 15, he declared that "the just object of all government is to secure the happiness of the governed." He believed that the less the citizen's "inalienable and inherent" rights of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" are "limited and circumscribed by artificial rules of legislation," the more republican will be the form of government, as "no principle is better established than that that government is the best which governs the least." He maintained that

The public relations of life, the acquisition of wealth, the struggle for place, reputation, and preferment, are not the relations, are not the pursuits, in which man's dearest interests are involved; and the right to pursue happiness in those relations, however valuable, is infinitely inferior to the just enjoyment of those rights that cluster around the cheerful fireside and sanctify the relations of home.<sup>36</sup>

Continuing, Holman contended that "it is only home and its





Veraestau As It Appears Today



sacred influences that soften down the asperities of his [man's] character, and render him at once a moral, social, and intellectual being." He warned that "once change those social relations, change those elements that enter into and compose the domestic relations of men, and sooner or later the whole fabric of society feels the effect." He praised woman as being the "chief ornament" in the whole social system. "Around the home crested by common law influences, all the endearments of life are gathered . . . ." He further argued that

Marriage is a sacramental ordinance, and not a mere matter of contract. Its design is . . . that every interest of the husband and wife, and even their legal existence, is blended together in one harmonious union; no discordant interest is left to disturb the concord of the domestic circle. . . . It matters not what are the effects of marriage as to the disposition of property. The real question is, . . . shall the sanctity of the marriage relation remain as it is? . . . or shall new elements be cast into the social system, which may by possibility produce strife and disunion in all the dearest and best relations of society? . . . If you separate the interest in property, you at least sever one of the links in that union.<sup>37</sup>

Holman aroused the anger of some of the delegates when he suggested that the creation of separate interests in the husband and wife would eventually "render divorces necessary for the protection of the separate interests in property." He declared that under common law, the interests of husband and wife are identical, in wealth, in happiness, and in property. He concluded his opposition to Owen's proposal on two grounds:

First, because I think it must in the very nature of things tend to weaken the unity of the domestic relation of husband and wife; and secondly, that it will build up, and foster, and cherish, a complicated and refined system of society amongst us.<sup>38</sup>

The whole question of the rights of married women was finally laid on the table on November 26, by a vote of 65 to 64. Holman did not vote, as he was absent from the convention at the time, having received a leave of absence on November 21.<sup>39</sup> The question was again discussed on December 16,<sup>40</sup> and Holman urged that the section be changed to read:

The real and personal property of women, owned at the time of mar-

riage, or afterwards acquired by *devise, or descent, or by gift*, except from the husband, in fraud of creditors, shall be and remain secured to them by law on equitable conditions.<sup>41</sup>

He felt that such a section would leave the relation of husband and wife as created by the common law; that it would tend to produce more just and equitable laws of descent and distribution; that it would protect the property of the wife from the debts of the husband; and that it would at least secure to the widow her just claim upon the husband's estate.<sup>42</sup> On December 17, Holman modified his amendment to read, "The real and personal property of married women shall be and remain secured to them on equitable conditions by law."<sup>43</sup> This amendment was not adopted, however, and the whole proposal was lost, Holman voting in the negative.<sup>44</sup>

Holman later presented a petition, signed by about one hundred ladies of Dearborn County, praying for a provision in the constitution giving married women the right of holding real and personal property separate from their husbands, at the same time disclaiming any intention of asking improper political rights. In presenting the petition, Holman said that

while the signers of this petition disclaim any intention of emerging beyond those bounds within which their sex generally moves, and in which their charms and virtues can most happily produce beneficial results, they still claim, upon a subject in which they are deeply interested, the right of being heard. I have the honor of being acquainted with a large portion of the fair petitioners, and I must say that in all their developments, socially as wives, daughters and mothers, they are worthy of the highest admiration, as the embodiments of all the peculiar virtues pertaining to womankind.<sup>45</sup>

This petition was referred to the Committee on Rights and Privileges, and did not appear again in the convention, but it was later to become law through an act of the General Assembly.<sup>46</sup>

When the question of imprisonment for debtors was under discussion before the convention, Holman vigorously opposed it, except where fraud was committed in attempting to evade payment of debt. In that case, said Holman, "manifestly it is to the interest of the people of Indiana that some remedial



agent should be adopted calculated to reach the fraud and give the creditor a sufficient remedy." But he maintained that poverty should never be punished as a crime.<sup>47</sup>

During the debate on the subject of the confiscation of private property by the state, Holman inserted the clause that

No man's personal service shall be demanded without just compensation. No man's property shall be taken by law or applied to public use without just compensation being first made therefor.<sup>48</sup>

Such a clause, he said, fully secured the citizen; at the same time the language of the old Constitution was almost literally retained. He was opposed to changing the language or phraseology of the original Constitution of 1816 more than was necessary:

Our people have grown up under the Constitution of 1816; they are familiar with its language and the courts have given it its proper legal construction; its provisions are also familiar to our citizens, and neither the language nor the provisions of that instrument should be changed unless there may be a necessity for the innovation, and then only to the extent that experience has proved to be necessary.<sup>49</sup>

He expressed the hope that the convention would manifest a desire to retain the language of the old Constitution as much as possible, and that they would not be carried away too far by a "reckless spirit of innovation and a wild desire for unnecessary reform."<sup>50</sup>

Congress, in 1850, had adopted the famous compromise measures relating to slavery. Many members of the convention were elated over the action, and on November 25, 1850, James Rariden introduced resolutions to the effect that the convention fully approve the vote of Congress. This was done chiefly to break the alliance between the Abolitionists and the Democrats in Indiana. It was a purely selfish move, and failed of its purpose.<sup>51</sup> The resolutions declared that it was the opinion of the members of the convention that the common sense of the people of Indiana was

that the whole series of compromise measures were adopted with a view to reconcile discordant opinions, and to restore the peace, harmony, and integrity of the Union; that they are founded upon generous and

patriotic concessions from all sections, and, if faithfully carried out, will realize the hopes of their projectors, in the restoration of confidence and kind feeling among the great sisterhood of States.<sup>52</sup>

The resolutions further declared that

whilst the people of Indiana stand ready, at all times, to uphold the laws enacted for the benefit of those who live in the slave States, they will be found equally firm in resisting all lawless designs, from whatever quarter, intended to break up the great confederacy of States; they are the friends of law and order, and devoted to the Union which our ancestors handed down to us, and are the enemies of all, whether in the North or at the South, who, upon any pretext, shall seek to overthrow it.<sup>53</sup>

The debate on the resolutions continued for several days before Holman expressed himself. Finally, on December 2, he addressed the convention. He maintained that it was proper to express opinions on a question involving the integrity of the American union. He deplored the attempt of some members to make this a political issue or a question of party politics. He declared that "the moment that this is to become a party question . . . from that moment the Union is not worth preserving." He denied that it was a political question. As far as he was concerned, if they adopted the patriotic sentiments of the people of Indiana, "that Indiana knows no North, that she knows no South, that she knows nothing but the Union," then he was for it. If they adopted the expression of a well-known American statesman, "My country—may she ever be right; but right or wrong, my country," then he was also with them.<sup>54</sup>

Holman then reviewed briefly the recent events which had given rise to this question, and showed that the country had passed through a severe ordeal. He argued that the "peculiar institution of slavery" had ever been fraught with danger to the Union. Every American citizen, he said, "knows with what unyielding tenacity the slave-holding States have clung to that institution" up to the admission of California. He feared that if these compromise measures had not been adopted, northern and southern fanaticism would have attained such an influence over the deliberations of Congress as to seriously threaten the permanency of the Union. It was a time for compromise, he



said. "Shall the Union be endangered because we have forgotten the spirit of concession in which our fathers cemented together the elements of this glorious Union?" The resolutions were finally adopted on December 3.<sup>55</sup>

Report Number 7, submitted to the convention, concerned the general subject of counties, particularly the qualifications and mode of appointment of county officers, methods of impeachment, uniform mode of doing county business, and the size of the counties. In this last item, Holman took an active interest. There was an attempt to insert in the new constitution a clause limiting the power of the General Assembly to determine the size of counties. Holman contended that if the delegates were making a short-lived constitution, then it might be feasible to limit the power of the Assembly, but because they were making a constitution "which may last for half a century," then it was important, he said, that they should look to the future and endeavor to see what may be necessary. He hoped no member of the convention would desire to make a constitution "which shall not last as long as that which we have assembled here to revise." He begged that the whole question of determining the size of the counties be left for the people to decide in the future as the need might arise.<sup>56</sup>

Holman's legal background in training and experience gave him a splendid opportunity to render a unique contribution to the convention. The committee on the organization of the courts of justice proposed that there should be a supreme court with five judges as well as circuit courts which would divide the state into at least twenty circuits. Holman believed that the convention had not remedied one great and radical defect in the system of courts. Attention was called to the fact that the committee had provided only for a supreme court and for circuit courts, and then for the organization "of such Inferior Courts as the Legislature may from time to time create." Holman expressed his opinion emphatically:

If it is understood that after a period of thirty-four years has elapsed under the supremely objectionable system, for the transaction of probate business, this Convention is to adjourn without furnishing any remedy for this evil, then I believe, and that sincerely, that the Convention will have performed its labors in a great respect, in vain; for if

there be one thing above all others that has been a crying evil in our judicial system, it is the defects in our modes of transacting probate business.<sup>57</sup>

Holman believed that the number of circuit judges should be twenty-four instead of twenty. He realized that there would be objection to the increase because of the additional expense. Already, he admitted, there were, in all, 286 judges for the transaction of business, "many of whom are incapable of performing the duties required at their hands. And this is more especially the case so far as the probate judges are concerned." He thought, however, that "So far as the Constitution of 1816 has defined the judicial system, it is unquestionably a good one." But he deplored the evil manner in which the probate business was being conducted. If the state were divided into twenty-four circuits, he argued, it would require about eight thousand voters to a circuit. The president-judge of the circuit would then be required to hold two terms of circuit court in each county, and also to hold at least three terms of probate court in each county. This would have the effect of giving character to the probate court and would also avoid the expense of appeals to the circuit courts from the decisions of the probate judge. In many parts of the state appeals involved very serious expense. It would also result in a uniformity of decisions, Holman reasoned, as well as securing competent judges for the transaction of probate business. He claimed that his plan would actually save the state thousands of dollars annually. He was opposed to adopting a surrogate system or a system of county courts, as he believed that such systems would not only increase the expense, but would also create "mere pettifogging" courts for the transaction of "the most important business."<sup>58</sup>

Holman said that he knew of no business connected with the administration of justice which was of more importance to the people than the probate business, and for that reason there should be competent judges presiding over such courts. The judges should not only be competent from a judicial point of view, he maintained, but they should be men of such personal integrity and such legal attainments as to give them the entire confidence of the people. He claimed that all over the state



courts had been high-handed. Although the judges themselves were undoubtedly honest, yet they were not men of sufficient intelligence and discrimination to be held in very high regard by the people.<sup>59</sup>

When this debate was renewed the following day, Holman again spoke at considerable length appealing to the emotions of his listeners, and winning applause when he said:

But when you come to try the rights of the widow, bereaved, and downcast, and forlorn, who comes to you with tearful eyes and a throbbing heart, whose soul is sunk within her, and whose affections are buried deep beneath the sod that covers all that is left of him who was the pride and solace of her life—and the rights of the orphan who has now no father, save that Father who is in Heaven—you are not only to put them off with an inferior tribunal, but even to take one per cent, from the little pittance left them by a dying husband and father, in the fond and anxious hope that they might not be compelled to rely upon the miserable charity of a cold and unfeeling world. [Great emotion and applause.] Sir, is this the liberality—is this the generosity of manhood? Is this the mode in which the rights of the widow and the orphan are to be disposed of by this Convention? No, sir, not one man in this body, I venture to assert . . . will ever be found so regardless of the rights of the bereaved, as to put his name to any Constitution containing such a provision as that. [Renewed applause.]<sup>60</sup>

The majority of delegates were Democrats and it was only natural that the spirit of Jackson should permeate their proceedings. The state government was brought more under the control of the people by the popular election of the state treasurer, auditor of state, and secretary of state. A new officer was also to be elected, a superintendent of public instruction. Judges of the supreme and circuit courts were to be elected for a six year term. Even the prosecuting attorneys, local justices, and other minor local officials held their offices by the will of the people. The convention made the most liberal application of the principles of manhood suffrage and popular elections, and even allowed unnaturalized citizens with only a one year's residence to vote, provided they had taken the first step toward naturalization. This arrangement, however, was condemned by opponents as being a political move.<sup>61</sup>

The attitude of the convention toward the question of slavery and the status of free negroes was inconsistent. While delegates

approved the principles contained in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, they also adopted the thirteenth article to the new constitution which not only forbade the coming into the state of any negro or mulatto, but also declared that any contracts entered into with any such person or persons would be void. Fines were to be levied on any citizen who should employ or otherwise encourage negroes to remain in the state. Money from these fines was to be used for the purpose of colonizing any negroes already in the state—or their descendants—who might wish to emigrate.<sup>62</sup> It was arranged by the convention that the thirteenth article should be voted on separately from the main body of the constitution.

Another change which was made by the new constitution was the substitution of biennial for annual sessions of the General Assembly. This was a change of doubtful wisdom, as biennial sessions of sixty-one days are generally too crowded for good work on the part of either house, although some of the delegates, including Holman, favored triennial sessions.<sup>63</sup> The General Assembly also was prohibited from enacting special or local laws in the future. The new constitution did not deal kindly with the subject of education: the various seminaries were abandoned and many delegates favored abolishing the state university and giving all funds to the public schools. A system of general banking laws was provided for, and the state was prohibited from becoming a stockholder in any banking or other corporation.<sup>64</sup>

After an eighteen weeks' session, the convention finally adjourned on February 10, 1851. During this entire period, popular interest in the state had been fully aroused. The daily and weekly newspapers published unabridged proceedings. Friends and foes alike wrote articles for the papers. Editorials explained the work of the convention and gave the editors' opinions on the issues under discussion. That "it was an eighteen weeks' course in political science for the citizens of the State," as asserted by Logan Esarey, the Indiana historian, seems a fair characterization.<sup>65</sup>

The convention ordered fifty-five thousand copies of the new constitution to be printed, five thousand of which were to be in the German language. The document itself was to be rati-



fied at the next election in August, 1851. It was to be submitted to the electors as a whole. The provision relating to the exclusion and possible colonization of negroes and mulattoes was to be voted on separately.<sup>66</sup> During the campaign no organized opposition developed against the document. In the election on August 4 every county in the state except Ohio cast an affirmative majority vote. Starke County's vote was unanimous. The constitution was accepted by a majority of 85,592, and the vote for the exclusion of colored persons was substantially the same.<sup>67</sup> Accordingly, on September 3, 1851, Governor Joseph D. Wright issued his proclamation declaring the constitution in force and effect from and after November 1, 1851.<sup>68</sup>

It was a trite saying, widespread among the people and in the newspapers of the state during and after the convention, that measures sustained by Holman and Robert Dale Owen were as a rule adopted and those opposed by them defeated. The purpose which they and other able members of the convention had in view, was to lop off the old, rusty and impractical provisions of the Constitution of 1816, and bring the state government up to the demands of the times. They tried to place it as nearly in touch with the people as practicable, thus giving them a republican form of government as required by the Federal Constitution. The new Constitution, while it provided for more democratic government, set up an almost impossible method of amendment. It was an instrument which conformed to the conditions and beliefs of the time, but not a particularly outstanding document. The mainspring of the new Constitution was reform that was based on the economic principles and ideas which were cherished by William S. Holman from the beginning to the end of his public career.<sup>69</sup>

Due largely to the reputation which he gained while a member of the convention, Holman was elected to the lower house of the first General Assembly which met under the new Constitution. This was the thirty-sixth session, 1851-1852. Holman was sworn into office by Isaac Blackford,<sup>70</sup> who had served on the supreme court with Holman's father and who had administered the oath of office to Holman as a member of the 1850 convention. Although Holman was one of the youngest men in the house, he was made chairman of the Judiciary Commit-

tee,<sup>71</sup> perhaps the most important committee of that legislature. It passed upon nearly all, and indeed framed many, of the major laws of a session, notable for the number of important laws enacted.

One of the most significant provisions of the new Constitution was its prohibition of all special and local laws. Upon the Judiciary Committee fell the responsibility of determining the constitutionality of proposed legislation. For example, House Bill No. 280, entitled "A bill to amend the charter of the city of Indianapolis," was referred to the Judiciary Committee. Holman reporting to the House declared that it was the opinion of the committee that the bill, by proposing to amend an act of incorporation created for municipal purposes, conflicted with the implied limitation of the legislative power on the subject contained in the Constitution, as well as with the general policy and spirit of that instrument. He asked that the bill be indefinitely postponed. The findings of the committee were accepted by the House.<sup>72</sup>

Another measure authorized railroad companies to borrow money and secure the repayment thereof by mortgage. Holman reporting against the bill stated that "an important object sought to be attained by the framers of the Constitution of the State, was to generalize legislation, and the past legislative history of the State is pregnant with evidences of the wisdom and necessity of that policy."<sup>73</sup>

A majority of the committee was of the opinion that the bill conflicted with the Constitution for three reasons. In the first place, Holman pointed out, it proposed to amend private and special acts of incorporation by an increase of their powers. In the second place, the bill conferred on artificial persons, created by the laws of the state, powers the extent of the exercise of which were made immediately dependent on other legislation than that from which they derived their corporate existence. Finally, the bill was unconstitutional because legislation such as that contemplated by the bill was really special legislation upon a subject which, by an express provision of the Constitution, should not be the subject of a special law. No further action on this bill was taken.<sup>74</sup>

Holman also reported unfavorably on the constitutionality



of House Bill No. 32, a bill to enable the board of commissioners of Porter County to borrow money for certain purposes. It was the opinion of the committee that to confer upon counties in their corporate character a right not granted to other natural and artificial persons of the state, such as the right to borrow money at a higher rate of interest than that allowed to other persons, would be in violation of the spirit, if not the letter of the Constitution. The bill was also considered to be special legislation and therefore unconstitutional. The house concurred in the committee's report.<sup>75</sup>

Probably the best statement of the viewpoint of Holman and his committee was given in a report on House Bill No. 39, which would have legalized the action of school commissioners in cases where the tax duplicates had been made out before the taking effect in their counties of the school law of 1849. While the committee members conceded that the passage of this bill would probably not violate the strict letter of the Constitution, they felt that it would be inexpedient and a violation of the document's intent. Holman declared:

One of the evils sought to be remedied by the constitution is local legislation, and if general laws are passed to be applied to, and for the benefit of particular persons and places, then the object of the constitution fails to be accomplished, and our statutes which should be curtailed as much as possible, will be burthened with laws in a great measure unnecessary and not desired by a great majority of our citizens. . . .<sup>76</sup>

As a consequence of the committee's report, the bill did not pass.

The wisdom and farsightedness of Holman are well expressed in a report which was made on House Bill No. 54 which concerned deeds and mortgages, and the fees for recording the same. The bill proposed to give to words used in deeds of conveyances and mortgages a technical and artificial meaning. Holman felt that such a change by legal enactment might give rise to fraud and mistake "at least until by long usage the artificial meaning and effects of the words shall become generally known." He felt that it was unadvisable that any particular form of words should be prescribed by law for deeds or mortgages or any other instruments of writing and that it was "not

desirable to correct by law even an evil in the ordinary business transactions of life, if the evil does not result from, and can be corrected without legal enactment." He believed it was safer to allow men in the execution of any written contracts whatever "to use such form of words in their natural sense as they may deem proper." The committee further suggested that

the form of deeds and mortgages in common use are not in Indiana the result of legal enactment, but that any form of words would be sufficiently expressed the intention of the parties to the instrument, and that in any such instrument, the words made use of would receive their common and ordinary signification.<sup>77</sup>

These appear to be strange words coming from a lawyer. But legal technicalities were not permitted to stand in Holman's way when he believed that it would be to the people's advantage to have it otherwise. He further contended that

no law should ever be enacted, unless there be a real and not merely imaginary necessity for it; and inasmuch as men may now adopt their own language in the execution of conveyances, or in conveyances of real estate, as in other contracts, the committee are of the opinion, that prescribing forms by law, if productive of no evil, could not be productive of good. . . .<sup>78</sup>

A rather interesting report was made by Holman for the Judiciary Committee in regard to the office of attorney-general. There had been considerable agitation in favor of creating such an office, and Holman's committee had been asked for a report on the advisability of such action. It was the opinion of the committee, Holman said, that many beneficial results might be anticipated from the establishment of such an office, in superintending litigations in which the interests of the state might be involved, and it was also expected that such an officer would render to the various executive offices of the state, especially those connected with the trust funds devoted to education, services of the most valuable character. Judging however from information furnished the committee,

the occasional amounts paid by the state in the employment of legal counsel are far less than the amount that would be necessary to secure permanently the services of a competent Attorney-General; and inas-



much as the office is not indispensably necessary for the due administration of the State government, and economy in the public expenditures imperatively required by the condition of our finances, therefore the committee recommend that the subject be indefinitely postponed.<sup>79</sup>

From this it appears that Holman was already beginning the championship of economy for which he became so famous in Congress. The house concurred in the report.

One of the most important bills under discussion in the thirty-sixth General Assembly was House Bill No. 27, which provided for a more uniform mode of doing township and county business. The fundamentals of this bill have become the basis of many of the present laws regarding local government in Indiana. Among the many features of this bill was a provision empowering county commissioners to lay off and divide the county into any number of civil townships that the convenience of the citizens might require, and accurately defining the boundaries thereof. Each township so organized was to be declared a body politic and could contract and be contracted with and could sue and be sued in any court having competent jurisdiction. Each township was to be governed by three trustees, a clerk, and a treasurer. The trustees were to have the care and superintendence of the highways and bridges within their townships and were to be overseers of the poor and the "fence viewers" of their respective townships. It appears that Holman was largely responsible for the progress of this measure through the lower house, and it was enacted into law in almost the same form in which it was reported from the Judiciary Committee.<sup>80</sup>

Holman was vitally interested also in House Bill No. 3, "a bill to regulate the mode of proceedings against the White Water Valley Canal Company, for failing to build, repair and keep up bridges." The bill as finally passed was made general and provided that whenever, by virtue of any law of the state, it should become necessary to bring suit against any canal company for failure to construct, build, or rebuild, repair or supply any bridge across the canal of any company at those points where such canal crosses any state or county road, or street of any town, or supply the place of such bridge across the same as had fallen down or floated away, the suit should be brought in the circuit court of the county involved. It pro-

vided also that the suit should be brought against the canal company in the name of the board of commissioners of the county or the corporate authorities of the town. The proceeds from such judgment that may be obtained in this manner were to be applied to the construction of the necessary bridge. This measure was finally passed by the General Assembly as a general law,<sup>81</sup> although, in fact, it was aimed at a single company.

It is a tribute to the work of Holman and his committee that few laws of that session of the legislature, including the Revised Statutes of 1852, were later declared unconstitutional or even materially changed. It is proof of the learning, sound judgment, and labor that was bestowed on them. Many years later it was the opinion of a leading lawyer of Indiana that "No labor of his [Holman's] will give more enduring fame than the services rendered in the Constitutional Convention of 1850 and the General Assembly of 1852."<sup>82</sup>

On October 6, 1885, there was held in the city of Indianapolis a reunion of all the surviving delegates to the Convention of 1850, and of the members of the first General Assembly held afterward. William Steele Holman was called upon to make one of the principal speeches on this occasion. He was introduced by William H. English, the president of the meeting. In his remarks, Holman reviewed the background of events leading up to the calling of the constitutional convention. He declared that "the people of Indiana were fortunate in the time they selected for the reorganization of their government." He praised the Constitution of 1816 "with its vigorous statement of the rights of the people, its specific divisions of political power, and general limitations on official authority." But in the thirty-four years following its adoption "the few intrepid and hardy pioneers" had become "a great people, with widespread and varied employments." They had "encountered the usual bitter experience of a State going into enterprises beyond the simple domain of government in an oppressive public debt." They had seen the authority of the state

broken into fragments in countless forms of special laws and local institutions, their system of education feeble and insufficient because there was no unity of purpose, their rules of judicial procedure, . . . by their artificial and complicated methods constantly defeating the ends of jus-



tice. They saw with indignation that public officers were not subject to just accountability for their official conduct.<sup>83</sup>

The speaker then reviewed some of the outstanding reforms of the constitutional convention. Chief among them, he said, were the restrictions imposed on the eligibility of the citizen to public employment, holding that the surest safeguards against corruption in public office were "brief and fixed terms of office, the rigid accountability of the officer, and the expression, at brief intervals, of the judgment of the people on the record he has made." He believed that:

The Constitution framed by the Convention and ratified by the people by an almost unexampled majority is so excellent as a whole, so clear in the protection of the rights of the citizens, so admirable in its restrictions on delegated authority in the interest of public security and honor, so strong in its protection of the people against improvident and questionable legislation, so broad and comprehensive in its humane provisions and its care for the education of the children of the State, and found so generally satisfactory in the presence of a generation of marvellous activity and progress, that it is an ungracious task to question its completeness.<sup>84</sup>

It was eminently proper, Holman maintained, that the surviving members of that convention and of the first General Assembly held under the new Constitution should meet together for a reunion as it was the task of the Assembly "to give vitality and force to the great reforms provided for in the Constitution, and to enact a system of laws in harmony with the instrument." Holman was convinced that "the magnitude of the work performed by that General Assembly, and its value as tested by experience, are without a parallel in the experience of legislation." The fruits of their labors were:

General laws, applicable to the whole State, . . . to take the place of the old partial and fragmentary system. Courts of justice were to be organized, salaries fixed, county and township business provided for, a general law for the incorporation of towns and cities, the organization of a general and uniform system of common schools wherein tuition should be without charge and equally open to all, and all else necessary for the government of a great commonwealth. . . . It was an industrious body of legislators, resolute to complete the work of reform inaugurated by the convention.<sup>85</sup>

In conclusion, Holman reviewed briefly some of the major reforms of both the convention and the Assembly:

Courts of justice and judicial procedure released from the arbitrary forms and servitude of the feudal age, and the law administered in the spirit of justice.

The husband and wife in rights of property and in the courts of justice, equal before the law, with the rights of the widow in the deceased husband's estate, against all others protected by humane provisions.

A penal code founded on the principles of reformation, and not vindictive justice.

Institutions for the care and education of the unfortunate. Asylums for the miserable.

The unfortunate debtor secure from imprisonment, and with his wife and children sheltered from oppression.

Political authority restricted to the limited domain of government, and the taxing power at least laid under partial restraint.

The purity of the public service promoted by just and prudent limitation on the term of official tenure, with prompt accountability for public trust.

The law-making power protected by massive barriers against improvident and corrupt legislation.

And above all else a uniform system of common schools wherein tuition is without charge and equally open to all, the pride and glory of the State.<sup>86</sup>

Holman's services to the state did not end with the General Assembly of 1851-1852. In the latter year he was elected judge of the common pleas court and served a four-year term.<sup>87</sup> While serving in this office, Governor Wright who had a high admiration for Holman's ability, learning and integrity appointed him judge of the circuit court, but as Holman was serving in a capacity to which the people had elected him, he declined the proffered honor. He did fill, however, three positions which his father had filled before him, with distinction and ability—prosecuting attorney, legislator, and judge.<sup>88</sup>

During his years of service to the state, Holman's leading traits of character developed rapidly. His experience as a lawyer and politician brought him in contact with many of the ablest men and brightest minds of Indiana. He was a serious student of the law. He read widely in the field of literature, history, fine arts, poetry, and philosophy. To a large degree he was self-taught.



He was able to exert a tremendous influence over men and public sentiment. One of his contemporaries characterized him as a jury lawyer:

In this respect, I do not think I ever saw, in my experience, his superior, and seldom his equal. . . . His style was conversational rather than oratorical. As a lawyer he controlled juries by his persuasiveness, by his power to analyze facts, the clearness with which he presented a mass of, or individual facts, to the mind of a jury, the reasonableness of his argument, and the spirit of fairness and perfect candor which pervaded every utterance.

Add to these qualities of mind the force of logic and logical deduction, of which he was master, and you combine the elements constituting a superior mind, and a lawyer entitled to the highest admiration, and an adversary to be dreaded, as well.<sup>89</sup>

It is said of Holman that he was untiring in the preparation of a lawsuit. In court he was as persistent as he was untiring. He never lost courage until the verdict was in. He was always on the alert to seize upon the weak points in his opponent's arguments. Judge Omar F. Roberts said of him:

I have known him, using those appliances with dexterity, skill and sound judgment, which were always at his command, to win causes deemed utterly hopeless; but it was the jury he mostly relied upon, in extremely doubtful cases, to pull him through. He had faith in juries and juries had confidence in him, and hence his influence over them. In a word, taken all in all, I think he was one of the ablest and most successful trial lawyers in the State of Indiana.<sup>90</sup>

Judge Holman had no taste or inclination for the prosecution of criminal causes involving the liberty or life of the accused. It was in civil cases, involving title to real estate, will contests, torts, and the like in which his genius, acumen and powers as a lawyer were drawn out most conspicuously. His skill and keen discernment were at times absolutely irresistible in the cross-examination; often his opponent's witnesses were turned in his favor on the important points of the testimony. Holman possessed the genius of convincing an average witness, not infrequently, that the position assumed in chief was clearly wrong, and would persuade him, by legitimate means, to correct the admitted error on cross-examination. In connection with such

triumphs, the mortification of opposing counsel can well be imagined.

In his earlier experiences at the bar, Holman's associates and adversaries were such men as James T. Brown, John and Ebenezer Dumont, Amos Lane, Daniel S. Major, Daniel Kelso, John Ryman, John D. Haynes, Phillip L. Spooner, and others of ability who gained distinction in the legal profession. That Holman was able to compete with such lawyers proves his legal attainments. Indeed, it was the invaluable experience which he gained in his services to the state which prepared him for his long and distinguished career in the national Congress.



## CHAPTER IV

### CRITICAL YEARS

WHILE SERVING as judge of the court of common pleas of Dearborn County, Indiana, in 1854, Holman was the Democratic nominee for representative from the fourth district, but was defeated by his opponent, Will Cumback, an able politician of the state.<sup>1</sup> Like other states at this time, Indiana was experiencing many political difficulties. Several new parties were springing up, most of them to disappear almost as suddenly as they were born, but one of them, the Republican Party, was destined to assume major proportions. The old Democratic Party soon found its position challenged. Holman's defeat in 1854 was mainly the result of a combination of the Know-Nothing and Temperance organizations which aimed to defeat any Democratic candidate. In the campaign, Holman spared neither time, trouble nor expense in defending the record of the Democratic Party, but he was forced to share the fate of many other good Democrats at that time.<sup>2</sup>

Southern Indiana was then dominated by a group of politicians who stood for democracy and expansion. The majority of them were Jacksonian Democrats, and a large percentage were from the South.<sup>3</sup> Naturally, they were sympathetic toward the South in many of the issues which were facing the country.

Jesse D. Bright was one of the leaders of the Democratic Party in Indiana. He nurtured the Southern sympathies of the people of his section, and represented the pro-slavery wing of the Democratic Party of the state. By careful manipulation of the General Assembly, he had been elected to the United States Senate in 1845, 1851, and 1857.<sup>4</sup> Rigid as was his control over the party's affairs in the state, he was unable to dictate to Holman or influence him unduly.

Holman was a supporter of Stephen A. Douglas to whom

Bringt was bitterly opposed, although he approved the passage of Douglas' Kansas-Nebraska Bill.<sup>5</sup> The people of Indiana as a whole, however, did not favor the measure, and only two members of Congress who voted for it were returned in the elections of 1854.<sup>6</sup> It was undoubtedly Holman's approval of the bill which caused his defeat in 1854.

Although this was a severe blow to his hopes, Holman and his friends were not discouraged.<sup>7</sup> In 1856 he was again a candidate for the nomination in the Democratic district convention, and was again defeated.<sup>8</sup> In 1858, the Democrats once more insisted that Holman be their spokesman at Washington, and this time he won the nomination and was elected to the thirty-sixth Congress as one of eleven members from Indiana. A considerable number of his colleagues were either already famous, or were destined to play leading roles in the later history of the country. When he entered the House in 1859, he found about him such men as Elihu B. Washbourn, John A. Logan, Charles Francis Adams, Roscoe Conkling, Justin S. Morrill, S. S. (Sunset) Cox, George H. Pendleton, Galusha A. Grow, and Thaddeus Stevens. The Indiana delegation included Schuyler Colfax, William H. English, and William E. Niblack. It was largely through his contacts with these men that Holman was to win his reputation. He soon became familiar with all the prominent statesmen who held seats in either branch of Congress, or were charged with administrative duties.

Holman's long congressional career began in the midst of exciting times. The new Republican Party was gaining momentum rapidly; Kansas was experiencing its bitter troubles; Chief Justice Roger B. Taney had written the majority opinion in the Dred Scott case; Abraham Lincoln of Illinois was gaining popularity because of his debates with Stephen A. Douglas; the John Brown raid at Harper's Ferry had occurred and had been suppressed; apparently the North and South were fast approaching an open break. The Democratic administration under President James Buchanan was to have two more years of life, but as a result of the elections of 1858, the House of Representatives was divided almost equally, with the Republicans holding a slight plurality.

The attitude which Holman would take toward national ques-



tions which were to face Congress, had been revealed in a Fourth of July address which he made in 1856. After reviewing in glowing terms the history of the United States, he praised the Constitution as "the title deed of our freedom, because it is the bond of the union of states." The Union, he said, was "the mighty incentive to our unexampled prosperity." He believed that it could be preserved only "by conciliatory and conservative councils, by acting as one people, and not as a divided nation, and above all, by equal and impartial justice to every part, and to the institutions of every part of the entire republic." He declared that no institution on earth had "excited such involuntary devotion as the union of states," and he spoke of this Union as "the ark of security . . . to humanity itself." He called upon his hearers to "seek to preserve it in the spirit of forbearance and concession in which it was formed." He implored them to teach their children "to love their country—their whole country, to venerate its constitution . . . to hold as only less sacred than duty to God the preservation of the union of the States."<sup>9</sup>

One of the first tests of strength in the new Congress came in the election of the Speaker of the House. In a letter which Holman wrote to his brother-in-law a few days after Congress assembled in December, 1859, he remarked:

The House is not organized and it is impossible to tell when it will be. The opposition with a large majority cannot harmonize on a candidate for Speaker.

The country is meeting a dangerous crisis. The policy of the Republican party has pushed us to the very verge of disunion. The result of the slavery agitation in the north will soon render a union of the States impossible if it is persisted in in the spirit which has heretofore characterized it.<sup>10</sup>

John Sherman of Ohio seemed to be the favorite among the Republicans from the start, but he had endorsed *The Impending Crisis*, an attack upon slavery, which was written by Hinton Rowan Helper. The Republicans had adopted the book as campaign propaganda, and northern Democrats had joined with southern Democrats in accepting a resolution that its doctrines and sentiments were "insurrectionary and hostile to the domestic peace and tranquility of the country, and that no member of



this House who has endorsed and recommended it, or the compend from it, is fit to be the Speaker of this House."<sup>11</sup>

The voting for Speaker began on December 5, 1859. On the first ballot, there were 230 votes cast, 116 being necessary for a choice. Thomas S. Bocock of Virginia received eighty-six, Sherman sixty-six, Galusha A. Grow of Pennsylvania forty-three, and the rest were scattered. Holman cast his vote for Bocock.<sup>12</sup> The voting continued day after day, and for fifteen ballots Holman voted for Bocock. On the sixteenth ballot, Holman switched to John A. McClernand, who received twenty-eight votes,<sup>13</sup> but on the seventeenth ballot, when it was found that McClernand at that time could not win the election, Holman cast his vote for John S. Millson, of Virginia, who received ninety-five votes.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout the remainder of the balloting, Holman gave his vote at various times to John W. Stevenson of Kentucky, John S. Phelps of Missouri, McClernand, Andrew J. Hamilton of Texas, and William E. Niblack of Indiana.<sup>15</sup> Finally, on January 30, 1860, Sherman withdrew his name as a candidate, and the rivalry was then between William Pennington of New Jersey and William N. H. Smith of North Carolina.<sup>16</sup> On the thirty-ninth ballot, Smith received 112 votes, and he held that number until he withdrew his name on January 31, after the forty-second ballot had been taken. McClernand now took Smith's place against Pennington.<sup>17</sup> On the forty-fourth ballot, on February 1, Pennington was elected with 117 votes out of 233, with Holman giving his vote to McClernand, who received eighty-five votes.<sup>18</sup>

On February 3, 1860, Holman addressed a letter to the editor of the Lawrenceburg (Indiana) *Register*, explaining his vote against Smith, who was the so-called Democratic candidate for Speaker. All the Democratic members of Congress except Holman and two others had voted for Smith. These three votes would have elected him. In justification of his vote, Holman declared that in 1857, Smith was nominated for Congress "by the American or Know-Nothing party" of his district, against the Democratic candidate and was beaten. In 1859, Smith was the nominee of the "Southern opposition party," against the "*regular Democratic candidate*," and was elected, "he and his opponents



occupying the same position with reference to a slave code." Smith, according to Holman, was one of the twenty-three men composing the "American or Southern Opposition party" of the House. Smith's nomination was announced to the House, he said, "by Mr. Mallory, of the Louisville, Ky., District, who said . . . that in choosing between the Democratic and Republican parties, 'I shall proceed as I would in choosing between the *typhus fever* and smallpox.'"<sup>19</sup>

Smith received the united vote of the Know-Nothing Party, Holman explained, and ultimately a large number of the Democratic members, "actuated, I have no doubt, by patriotic motives," voted for him. But Holman was not willing to abandon his own party, although no member could have been more anxious to see the House organized than he. The Democratic Party was largely in the minority, and the elements of the opposition, having the control of the House, "ought to be held responsible for the delay." Holman hoped that no Democrat would censure him "for refusing to abandon my own party principles, in an act of such political significance, as the election of a Speaker of the House." He did not feel that the Democratic Party was called upon to "choose between the Americans and the Republicans," but he felt that the Democrats should have preserved their own organization, to triumph or fall together. Holman was satisfied that his constituents would not have directed him to vote differently, with a full knowledge of all the facts.<sup>20</sup>

Holman apparently induced many people to approve his vote, through a personal plea which he made to them while on a visit to Indiana. Some who had been Holman's bitter opponents, now declared themselves his friends. His manner of speaking, it was reported, was "entirely argumentative. He addresses the judgment and not the passion, and meets signal success in the way of producing conviction."<sup>21</sup>

Holman was censured in many other quarters, nevertheless. Some felt that the reasons for giving his vote as he did may have been entirely satisfactory to himself,

but, under all the circumstances, we incline to the opinion that a conservative American would have been . . . [better than Pennington]. We

have great confidence in our friend's democracy, and under ordinary circumstances his action would have been right; but we regard this case as an extraordinary one, and democrats were justifiable in voting for any man to prevent the election of a Black Republican!<sup>22</sup>

Others deeply regretted that Holman could not vote with the other Democrats. Some thought his action was based on insufficient reasons. Still others felt that he made a serious mistake "as a man always does when he refuses to go with his party votes in Congress." But they declared that Holman still had time to redeem himself in the long session which was before him, "and no one in the district will more readily and cheerfully indorse and defend him when we think he votes right." Still others were of the opinion that Holman thought himself a better Democrat and one better able to judge the action which would advance his party and the public interests than the ninety Democrat members who voted for Smith. While they had great confidence in the political integrity and sagacity of Holman and commended his fidelity to the organization of the party, yet they did not think that he was less infallible than the regular Democrats from all sections of the country who had voted for Smith. "We may be mistaken, however," they declared, "and Mr. Holman's indirect censure of his Democratic colleagues may have been deserved. We hope he may never be less true to his party organization than he declares himself to have been in this vote for Speaker."<sup>23</sup>

During the debates over the election of Speaker, Holman made his initial speech in the House. In it he expressed his whole attitude toward the constitutional question which was beginning to split the Union. He stressed some of the characteristics of the Democratic and Republican parties. He declared that the principles which were recognized by Congress were purely of a national character, and the questions which in their nature were local or domestic, were reserved exclusively within the jurisdiction of the respective states. The organization of the Democratic Party, he said, was "within the limits of the Constitution," while the leading principles of the Republican Party were contrary to "the genius and character of the institutions of our country." The Republican Party, he charged,



has organized itself upon a measure which is not national—upon a single solitary question, purely domestic; one of local, not of general concern. It is certainly a source of infinite regret that there should exist in our midst a question which, while it demands the public attention of the North, does, in truth, interest only the people of another portion of the country.<sup>24</sup>

Holman then discussed the rise of that party whose acts and objects were “purely sectional,” and reviewed the whole question of the slavery controversy. He regarded the Missouri Compromise line as “clearly in conflict with the third section of the treaty between this Government and France, by which the Louisiana Territory was ceded to this Government.” It was his opinion that the conduct of the South in regard to the various compromises was “eminently magnanimous,” and he felt that for this reason, the non-slaveholding states should adopt a more conservative and more national policy with regard to the questions affecting all portions of the Union. He believed that Congress did not possess the power to legislate on the subject of slavery, under any circumstances whatever, because the subject was a purely domestic one. He supported the principles of Stephen A. Douglas’ Kansas-Nebraska Act, which, he said, invested the people of the territories with ample power to regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, at any time in their discretion.<sup>25</sup>

Holman was vehement in his denunciation of the doctrine of secession. He declared that:

there is one pillar of state which has never been shaken; there is one arbiter for the settlement of the various questions which may spring up between the States which is entitled to our fullest confidence; I refer to that element of our nation’s greatness, the Supreme Court of the United States.<sup>26</sup>

In concluding his speech, Holman asserted that while the people of both North and South were expressing extreme views on the subject of slavery and secession, the people of the border states, “which these fierce political elements would make a wall of fire or a torrent of blood,” viewed the institutions of the several states impartially, cultivated conservative feelings and sentiments of fraternal affection, and would never listen to the ma-

lignant counsels of disunion, "come from what quarter they may." Indiana, he said, would never consent to making the Ohio River the boundary "between severed and hostile nations."<sup>27</sup>

When the balloting for the Speakership was nearing its close, Holman again expressed his sentiments and those of his constituents, in reference to the great questions which were agitating Congress. The Democratic Party of Indiana had recently held a convention and had adopted a series of resolutions which contained the views of "the entire Democracy" of the state. These resolutions were read by Holman. They expressed the confidence of the Democrats of the state in the principles of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which principles were "the only safe and sound solution of the slavery question." The resolutions also declared that it was the duty "of every citizen North and South, East and West, to discountenance all parties and organizations" that violated the spirit of the Constitution. Protests and denunciations also were made in the resolutions against "all acts, or inflammatory appeals, which intend or tend to make this Union less perfect, or to jeopardize or disturb its domestic tranquility, or to mar the spirit of harmony, compromise, and concession, upon which the Union was formed by our fathers."<sup>28</sup>

The resolutions concluded with a denunciation of the recent events at Harper's Ferry "as a crime, not only against the State of Virginia, but against the Union itself," and added, "we hereby reprobate and denounce the crime and the treason." The decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States were accepted as "the best evidence of the true meaning of the Constitution," and pledges were made to "respect and maintain them with the fidelity we owe to the Constitution itself."<sup>29</sup>

Even as early as December 30, 1859, Holman had to defend his home city against an accusation which had been made a few days before by John A. Logan of Illinois. Logan had asserted that sympathy was expressed for John Brown at a Republican meeting which was held in Aurora, but in refutation, Holman declared:

I desire to state that the city of Aurora, one of the flourishing cities of Indiana, is a city loyal to the Constitution and to the laws of the land, and that no such meeting was held there. The citizens of that place are



not going to rest under the impression for a moment of having sympathized with men who disturb the peace of the country.<sup>30</sup>

Holman throughout the exciting period of the Civil War, was persistently a Union man, raising his voice in support of the Constitution, and against acts of violence such as John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry. His voice was among the first to be upraised in behalf of a united country and the enforcement of the federal law by the united government, even to the extent of restraining by armed force, if necessary, the secession of a state from the Union.

This attitude was in marked contrast to that of Senator Jesse D. Bright, the so-called boss of the Democratic Party in Indiana.<sup>31</sup> Holman was in favor of preserving the Union at all costs, but he was also a firm believer in the doctrine of state rights. He did not feel, though, that the "ultra squatter sovereignty" idea of the Southern states should be tolerated.

As early as December 28, 1859, Holman raised the question of whether the Democracy of a few states, "after the ultra squatter sovereignty grounds occupied by them in the canvass of 1854 and 1856," could sustain themselves on the doctrine that the "people of the territories cannot during their territorial existence legislate on the subject of slavery at all." He expressed his own fear of the result, in a letter to Allen Hamilton:

We cannot carry a single Congressional District on that doctrine in the State [of Indiana]. The South largely controls politics here [Washington], & the South can only be influenced by a bold and unambiguous expression against this doctrine, it will be understood as conceded to be right.<sup>32</sup>

As the deliberations of the thirty-sixth Congress progressed, Holman came more and more to the conclusion that the attitude of the politicians at Washington would bring the country to open warfare. Senator Jefferson Davis, spokesman for the extreme southerners, embodied their ideas in a set of resolutions which he presented to the Senate early in 1860. He reaffirmed the state sovereignty idea of Calhoun, and declared it the duty of the Senate to resist all attempts to discriminate as to persons or property in the territories. He attacked the Freeport Doctrine

of Douglas by declaring that neither Congress nor a territorial legislature had the power to restrict the right of any citizen to take his slave property into the territories, and declared it to be the duty of Congress to protect such property. Holman rejoiced over the quick repudiation of these resolutions by the Senate. He was glad that "Democrats everywhere condemn this move."<sup>33</sup>

Already Holman was having his misgivings about the power of Congress to effect a solution of the problems facing the country. He had little faith in the honesty and ability of the politicians. He wrote that he was

tired of political life and unless something occurs hereafter, I shall not be desirous of prolonging it. The peril of the country is manifest here, and the only safety is to be found in the good sense of the masses of the people, not in the politicians.<sup>34</sup>

Holman's contempt of the actions of certain groups in the national capital is expressed in a letter which he wrote to his brother-in-law:

Indeed I have been so long mixed up in this center of political intrigue, that I have learned I trust to appreciate the more highly the natural and social world in which I have lived and to cordially dislike in the main the artificial one here at the Capital. I am very far from having fallen in love with Washington life. I expect that if I could without much effort obtain the nomination for re-election I would run again as in a pecuniary point of view, now that I have missed several terms of Court & my practice accordingly impaired. It would be to my advantage to remain here another session, but there are a multitude of candidates in my District & the one term system rather a favorite with our people & the politicians are making unusual efforts to bring on the Convention while I am still here, renders the chances so uncertain that I cannot fully determine whether I will be a candidate or not. . . . So that my movements in the future are very uncertain.<sup>35</sup>

While the existence of slavery in connection with the federal territories was the immediate cause of the agitation which was shaking the very foundations of the country, Holman believed with many others that the real question involved was one of federal power, with the Republican Party ever seeking to increase the powers of the federal government, and the Democratic Party seeking to restrain that power to constitutional limitations. It was his belief that no act of the Republican Party



could be commended. It had arrayed itself against the Supreme Court, "the final arbiter of constitutional disputes," and had discriminated in regard to rights of citizenship against the white man in favor of the African race. It had opposed the people of the territories by "demanding their submission to a law-making power in which they have no voice." The Republican Party, he said, had demanded "an exclusion of the domestic policy of the South from the national possessions." He claimed that the South, despite the "malignant counsels of the disunionists," would remain true to the Union, "unless fanaticism, in the blindness of its fury, shall convert that Union . . . into an instrument of *injustice* and *dishonor*."<sup>36</sup>

In the face of the circumstances which were trying men's souls in those days, Holman appealed for a conservative spirit. He believed it was upon the conservative elements of the nation, the men of moderate counsels, that the Union rested. He asserted that, "while neither patriotism nor philanthropy will justify this endless and treasonable interference with the domestic policy of the South," it could "scarcely extenuate the eagerness of southern citizens to impute to the whole people of the free states a willingness to participate in the invasion of their constitutional rights, or the revolting proposition" that the Union should be dissolved.<sup>37</sup>

Holman again defended the Supreme Court in its recent decision in the Dred Scott case. He spoke of the Court as "the peculiar guardian of the Constitution and the most conservative element in the Government," and its opinions were entitled to profound respect. He deplored the war which was being waged against the Court. He denied that the Dred Scott decision gave Congress either the power to exclude slavery from the territories, or forced it to protect slavery where it already existed. He declared that Indiana, "a State that has never for one moment faltered in its devotion to the Constitution, or failed in fidelity to its obligations," would "defend that decision against the insidious assaults which have been made upon it." Holman concluded his remarks by referring to the precarious condition in which the nation then found itself, and he laid the blame at the door of the Republican Party. Patriotic men everywhere, he said, were looking to the Democratic Party "as the only political organization

possessing either the power or the will to meet that crisis and avert the impending danger."<sup>38</sup>

In commenting on this speech, Addison Bookwalter, an Indiana editor, said:

As an able and eloquent exposition of the principles which have always governed the Democratic party, as a clear and logical analysis of the Dred Scott decision, and as a scathing review of those political organizations which have opposed us, the effort ranks with the best that has been made this session. As conservative and patriotic in its bearing, it is a land-mark to the Democratic party; as impartial and dispassionate, his argument will, while it receives the hearty endorsement of his political friends, command the grave attention of his political opponents.<sup>39</sup>

Another editorial declared that Holman's speech was an able one, in which he gave a "fine disquisition of the principles of popular Sovereignty and gave a plausible interpretation of the Kansas-Nebraska Act," which proved that he was "well-versed in the political history of our country." The editor declared that Holman's speech was "logical and rhetorical" throughout, and reflected credit on him as a representative.<sup>40</sup>

The major national event which occurred during the first session of the thirty-sixth Congress was the presidential election of 1860. The Democratic state convention had met in Indianapolis on January 11, 1860, in order to name delegates to the national convention at Charleston, South Carolina, on April 23. The state convention was divided into two groups which bitterly opposed each other. One group, led by Bright, favored the re-nomination of Buchanan; the Douglas men were led by Lew Wallace. This latter group really controlled the convention. Bright and his followers finally formed an organization to support John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky. It was not expected that Breckinridge would carry the state, but Bright was determined to impair Douglas' chance to the full extent of his ability.<sup>41</sup>

When the Democratic Party met in its national convention at Charleston, it was unable to agree on a candidate. The convention split into two separate and antagonistic bodies. Another convention was held at Baltimore, and Douglas was nominated without much difficulty, but those delegates who opposed Douglas met in a separate convention at Richmond, and chose Breckin-



ridge as their standard-bearer. The Douglas group accepted the "popular sovereignty" idea as their platform, while the other faction demanded full congressional protection for slavery wherever it existed, and national legislation that would permit slavery to be extended into the territories.

The Republicans held their convention in Chicago and nominated Abraham Lincoln. They adopted a platform in opposition to the further extension of slavery. Another group, calling itself the Constitutional Union Party, met at Baltimore. Its members included the old-line Whigs of the North, most of the southern Whigs, and others who opposed the views of both the Republicans and Democrats. John Bell of Tennessee was their nominee for president.

Holman's attitude toward the Democratic conventions was expressed in a letter to his brother-in-law. He thought that the platform adopted at Charleston was "as far as we can go, & sustain ourselves in the free states & no man stands the ghost of a chance of being elected either on that platform or any other except Douglas." He said that Douglas' friends and he himself "count with absolute confidence on his receiving the nomination at Baltimore, & that the Platform will remain unchanged." Holman believed that:

If Douglas is the nominee with a full representation from all the States of the South, or all except the *Gulf Squadron*, he will certainly be elected if the Richmond Convention nominates a man who has openly sympathized with the *seceders*. If they nominate a fair *union* man so as to give them the control of the South, the result is not only doubtful, but the chances are that no ticket of one section will have much strength in the other. The election will go into the House & it may be feared the Union placed in real peril. We have certainly fallen on evil times & nothing will save the country and the Union but the magnanimous councils of the conservative masses of the people. . . . Everything else being equal, we are well-rid as a party, of the disunionists of the extreme South.<sup>42</sup>

Holman was renominated in 1860 by the Democratic party in the fourth district of Indiana. At a Democratic meeting held in Aurora on May 19, the following resolution was adopted:

That the eminently conservative and patriotic course of the Hon. William S. Holman, our Representative in Congress, meets with our hearty

and entire approval, and we hereby commend him to the Democracy of this District for renomination.<sup>43</sup>

Another county convention, held on June 8, heartily approved the course of Holman and declared that he had "faithfully represented the sentiments of his constituency."<sup>44</sup>

One newspaper editorial expressed the opinion that the candidate should be a man "who can bring to the ticket the most strength—who can combine high personal character with commanding abilities and thereby prosecute a vigorous canvass. . . ." In 1858, Holman had been successful at a time when his party had met defeat in every other district. Holman was the "*Right Man in the Right Place*. . . . And such was the unbounded confidence which the *people* reposed in *Him*, that multitudes flocked to his standard. . . ." Believing the election of 1860 was more important than that of 1858, the editor added:

We want a man who can bring to the ticket both character and enthusiasm—that man is William S. Holman. The people want him, and he must yield to their wishes, and bear our standard in the approaching contest. . . . The people *ask* for Judge Holman, and the genius of Democracy, as well as the interests at stake, demands that their wishes should be gratified.<sup>45</sup>

The editor of the Lawrenceburg *Register* raised the question whether the Indiana Democracy should cast about for another candidate,

or shall we have for our standard bearer the honored chieftain, who, in times past, has led us to victory; and whose courage and skill has proved equal to every emergency? Judge Holman is a soldier of Democracy, tried and true; ever on the lookout for the enemy. With his armor on he marshals the forces of Democracy for the contest and always to the discomfiture and overthrow of Black Republicanism.<sup>46</sup>

Holman apparently entered wholeheartedly into the campaign. It was generally expected that he would win in the election, even though the Democratic Party in Indiana was divided. His brother Jesse wrote to Hamilton:

In reference to William's re-election I think there is no reasonable doubt. I do not think there will be any Breckinridge candidate brought out, and even if there were I do not suppose it would command voters enough



to defeat William. The Breckinridge men here will support state and county tickets, etc., and I think many of them will vote for Douglas, being convinced that any other course would merely aid the republicans. William is not at home now. I think he is in Rush County. His friends in general apprehend no danger of defeat.<sup>47</sup>

Holman himself was quite confident of his success early in his campaign. On September 4 he wrote:

I do not apprehend any difficulty now from divisions in our ranks. The Breckinridge men in this part of the State will support the local tickets, State included. I think so without a doubt. I am far from being free from embarrassments in this District, but I now feel confident of success by a fair majority. . . . I am devoting every day to the canvass, speaking twice a day & will devote every hour to it if my health holds out until the election.<sup>48</sup>

As the campaign progressed, however, Holman was less hopeful of success. At the end of September, he wrote that he was active in his canvass and "not too certain of the result."<sup>49</sup> But when the election was held in October, Holman was elected. He briefly reported the result of the vote to Hamilton:

You have already seen by the newspapers that I have carried this District by the 'skin of my teeth.' My majority is a little upwards of five hundred, and about 150 ahead of our State ticket. The effort to defeat me was immensely greater than was ever made in this District. . . . I shall hardly be inclined to trust fortune soon again on so uncertain an element. . . .<sup>50</sup>

When the returns of the national election were tabulated, it was found that Lincoln had received 180 of the 303 electoral votes, and his election was, therefore, certain. His popular vote, however, was only 1,866,452 as against 2,813,741 for his three opponents. If Lincoln were elected the South had threatened secession. Commenting on the critical situation, Holman declared:

The temper of the South in view of Lincoln's election is well calculated to excite alarm. The secession of a single State even if the other Southern States remain true to the Union would be attended with endless misfortune, for the idea of coercing a sovereign State is absurd. Individual traitors might (and should be) hanged, but what remedy is there when an entire sovereign & independent State secedes? The right (morally speaking) of secession does not exist under the Constitution, but yet if a

State does secede, the idea of pressing the form of a united Government by force is inconsistent with the fundamental principles of Government & would tend to a rapid centralization of the powers of the Nation utterly destructive of the independence & equality of the States.<sup>51</sup>

Holman believed that if the government should attempt coercion in the event of the actual secession of a southern state, such a use of force would unite the entire South in hostility to the Union and would render civil war inevitable. He was convinced that dissolution could never result from deliberate action, but from the "madness & folly of the movement without reference to results." He thought that the real danger of disunion was to be found in "the precipitate rashness of the Southern leaders and the arrogant and intemperate assumption of superiority on the part of the Republicans of the North." He did not believe that the masses of any state except South Carolina were prepared for secession, and it was his hope that "the absence of sympathy in such a move on the part of the other Southern States" would cause them to hesitate before they went too far. He believed that

the South will determine to watch for an *overt act* of injustice & none such can be committed, for Mr. Lincoln's administration must at once fail (in view of the majorities against him in the Senate & House) unless it is highly wise & conservative. We are however approaching a fearful crisis & all the wisdom & moderation of the conservative masses will be necessary to save us. I do not however believe that the hour for dissolution has come & I believe that the real devotion to the Union which pervades the masses of our people North and South will devise some mode of adjusting the cause of the bitter animosity which now exists.<sup>52</sup>

Two weeks before secession actually began, Holman wrote a letter to a Mr. Nelson, marked "Not intended for the public," in which he declared that

the secession of South Carolina as early as the 18th inst., seems to be inevitable, and if the existing political influences continue to inflame the Southern mind, Alabama, Mississippi and Florida will follow her in rapid succession. Indeed, the whole South sympathize in the movement, and unless a radical change of public sentiment shall speedily occur both North and South, inspired by devotion to the Union and a sense of its peril, the days of the Confederacy are numbered. Congress can do but little, the remedy is with the people, and I trust in God they will be found able to meet the emergency. . . . I still indulge the hope that our



people will rise superior to the demands of party spirit and sectional jealousies, and restore peace and fraternal feelings to our distracted country.<sup>53</sup>

During the weeks following the presidential election, Holman's fears that the Union was on the verge of disruption increased. Although the crisis was full of danger, he yet entertained the hope that some solution to the problem would be found, but he feared that the endless discussion of "this dangerous & delicate question of African slavery" had at last produced apparently "its legitimate fruit—a separation of the States." In analyzing the future action of the various States, it seemed impossible, he wrote,

to prevent South Carolina from precipitate action, & Alabama, Florida and Mississippi will in all human probability follow her example. But I am hopeful so far as the other States are concerned, and if Georgia, Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas can be induced to pause for a while, I feel quite confident that the reaction now going on in the public mind of the South will reach such a point of conservatism as to induce the South to believe that their rights will be respected, & then perhaps with some new guarantees constitutional or legislative our Union can be placed on a firm foundation, and mutual confidence restored.<sup>54</sup>

As to the attitude of the other states, he thought that:

In the main Kentucky, Virginia, Missouri, Tennessee & Maryland are for the Union if its preservation can be effected consistently with their honor & peace, & such is the feeling to some extent in Louisiana & Arkansas, & to some slight extent in *Georgia*.<sup>55</sup>

Within six weeks after the election of Lincoln, South Carolina took the fatal step of secession. Its convention met in the Baptist Church in the town of Columbia on December 17, 1860, and then because the smallpox was raging there, it met the following day in Charleston to adopt the famous Ordinance of Secession. Appeals were made to other states and they soon followed suit. Instead of the secession movement modulating, as Holman had hoped, there was a steady advance in that direction which was to engulf almost the entire South. With a heavy heart Holman wrote:

We are in the midst of revolution. . . . We approach the verge of actual

disunion with steady and unrelenting progress. The clouds deepen and at no remote period with the present agencies at work we must expect to face all the consequences of a revolution that divides us into two nations on the slave line. I have not seen the slightest evidence of reaction since Congress met. Every *moment* and every *movement* tends to consolidate the Southern sentiment, and even the most conservative of the Southern men look to a united South as an inevitable result. In the midst of these impending elements there is no yielding on the part of the Republicans. Not an inch is to be given by the leaders and in the main the Republican press sustain & back up their determination not to yield an inch.<sup>56</sup>

In the meantime, the second session of the thirty-sixth Congress had begun. It was to be marked by the gloom of all lovers of the Union, and by the joy of those who sympathized with southern independence. As the weeks passed Holman's mind gradually swung to the conclusion that seceding states must be coerced. Holman declared that the right of a state to withdraw from the Union was not recognized by the Constitution. He thought that neither the President nor Congress was invested with authority to recognize any state "in any other character than as one of the States of the Union." It was his belief that by the Constitution of the United States "the General Government is invested with power to collect the public revenues in all cases whatsoever, and to protect its property wherever situated." He introduced this resolution:

That the Judiciary Committee be instructed to report to the House whether the laws now in force are sufficient to enable the Government to effectually sustain its rights of property situated in the several States, or elsewhere, and to collect its revenues where an attempt shall be made to resist their collection; and if, in the opinion of said committee, the laws are insufficient, the said committee is instructed to report the necessary bill to accomplish effectually, the object aforesaid, and making it the imperative duty of the Government to call into requisition all the powers with which it is invested by the Constitution to protect the property of the United States wherever situated, and collect the revenues of the Government in all cases whatever, by the employment of the Navy or otherwise, as the exigencies of the case may require.<sup>57</sup>

Buchanan was still president. He was determined that responsibility should be assumed by Lincoln. He felt that secession was unconstitutional, but he did not know how to handle it in a law-



ful way. South Carolina sent three commissioners to Washington to arrange with the federal authorities as to the public properties within that state, but Buchanan received them as private gentlemen and referred them to Congress. It was Holman's hope that that body would "treat the treasonable movement with merited indignation."<sup>58</sup>

Many of the forts and arsenals within the seceded states had been taken over by these states immediately. There were three forts in Charleston Harbor—Castle Pinckney, Fort Moultrie, and Fort Sumter. The city itself contained a federal arsenal. Major Robert Anderson was in command. On the day after Christmas, realizing that his position in the city was untenable, Anderson removed his men to Fort Sumter. This aroused the Charlestonians, who sent remonstrances to President Buchanan. Holman, like other Union men in Washington, "approved and applauded" Anderson's "bold and determined course," but wrote:

What Mr. Buchanan will do in reference to it is uncertain. His timid and listless line of policy contributes to the strength of disunion, for indeed the body of the Southern people regard him as committed to their policy, and certainly his conduct justifies the belief.<sup>59</sup>

Holman insisted that it was the duty of the federal government to maintain possession of the public property

wherever it may be & of collecting the revenue at every hazzard. I do not regard it at all certain that Mr. Lincoln will be inaugurated at this Capital. In Virginia & Maryland the secession sentiments steadily increase & any unfortunate event might result in at least an attempt to seize the Capital. And if they act in mass how could it be prevented?<sup>60</sup>

Several attempts were made during the winter of 1860-1861 to compromise the questions at issue and thereby to bring back the seceded states or even to prevent further secession. Soon after Congress met in December a committee of thirty-three members of the House was appointed to see if some way could be found to end the difficulties which were rocking the nation. Holman introduced the following resolution:

The Constitution of the United States, by which the several States of the Union are organized into one Government, is a compact founded

upon good faith between the States, or mutual and permanent obligation; and the right of a State to secede from the compact, and to resume the powers surrendered in its adoption, is wholly unwarranted by the letter and spirit of its provisions.<sup>61</sup>

Accompanying resolutions declared that:

the mutual and common interest of the several States, in the obligations of the Constitution, renders it the imperative duty of the Federal Government to enforce, in good faith and with temperate firmness, the laws enacted in pursuance of its authority in all cases where their infringement would impair the constitutional rights of any State, or the common and reciprocal rights of the several States.<sup>62</sup>

The resolutions further instructed the select committee of thirty-three

to inquire whether the acts of Congress now in force are sufficient, in view of the present condition of public affairs, to protect the rights of the several States against attempts which have been made, by any State or States, to nullify the laws necessary to the existence of the Confederacy, and to carry out the provisions of the Constitution; and if the laws now in force are insufficient, it shall be the duty of said committee to report the necessary bill or bills, to provide for the emergency.<sup>63</sup>

Many letters and telegrams were sent to Holman from citizens and groups in Indiana, heartily endorsing these resolutions and pledging their earnest desire to prevent war and preserve the Union. One said that "until the Hon. William S. Holman assumes a different course from that already indicated . . . we deem instruction unnecessary."<sup>64</sup> An editorial declared: "We now find him, when other men have shirked from duty, standing up boldly, like an honest man, for the perpetuation of the Union as it is. We admire the course he has taken. His constituents, of all parties, cannot but endorse his statesmanlike course."<sup>65</sup> Another editor wrote: "We are much pleased to know, that in this day of political cowardice and treachery, that Indiana has one Representative in Congress who dares to be faithful to the Union. The . . . resolutions breathe the right spirit. Judge Holman is a true Democrat and will never bow the knee to the demon of disunion."<sup>66</sup>

Holman hoped that the committee would be able to present some measure of adjustment, but it seemed to him that the rem-



edy would be found "in the masses of our people & in the revival of a spirit of devotion to the Union & of fraternal feeling between the two sections of the country, rather than in the action of Congress."<sup>67</sup> After much deliberation, the committee could agree on nothing that would promise the slightest relief. Holman wrote that "their very failure will be received as an evidence that nothing can be done."<sup>68</sup>

Congress then turned to a plan which was introduced by Senator John Crittenden of Kentucky on December 18, 1860. This plan was in the form of constitutional amendments which would restore the Missouri Compromise line in the territories, guarantee non-interference by Congress with slavery in the states and the District of Columbia, and compensate owners for the loss of fugitive slaves. This compromise measure was not supported by the Republicans. Holman himself did not like the proposed amendments as a whole. He did not favor the idea of imposing restrictions on the people either North or South of the proposed line "on a question so peculiarly domestic & local as that of slavery." But he was convinced that

the South *even the border States* will be satisfied with no plan less effective than that of Crittenden's. If the North will not give them these guarantees the hopes of retaining within our Confederacy one Southern State, even the most conservative, is preposterous, unless some unforeseen event shall occur which will produce an entire reaction in the Southern mind.<sup>69</sup>

Holman would support the Crittenden plan only as a last resort, but in his judgment there was no alternative between the adoption of these propositions and a united South. This would result in a Civil War, he said, and one section "must suffer as much from it as any other part of the Union." He saw that the two sections were steadily approaching the vortex of war, although it was "not easy for people who for so many years have lived prosperously & happily together to sever the ties that unite them. But every day indicates more & more clearly the impossibility of avoiding a collision between the Government & seceding States."<sup>70</sup>

Constantly did Holman urge some of the leading politicians of Indiana to get expressions from the people of his state as to

the Crittenden measures. A letter which he wrote to Cornelius O'Brien of Lawrenceburg is typical:

I hope your Democratic members will not fail to take the earliest opportunity to get the Crittenden propositions before both branches of our Legislature with a view to a direct expression. I do not like some of them. I dislike an effort to amend the Constitution & I am opposed to restricting the action of the people of a territory in determining on their domestic institutions, but the real truth is there is no alternative other than the adoption of those propositions or an irreparable [*sic*] dissolution of the Union with a *United South*, as a border State. Our fate and fortunes are in terrible jeopardy. I am satisfied that even the most conservative of the Southern States will not consent to any guarantees less effective than those proposed by Senator Crittenden. If we would save the Union we must act at once. I trust however that under no circumstances our Democrats will hesitate in demanding an enforcement of the laws of the General Government.<sup>71</sup>

Allen Hamilton, of Fort Wayne, was a member of the Indiana General Assembly at this time and he had a good opportunity to find out the attitude of his colleagues. He reported his findings to Holman, who replied:

I am rejoiced to hear that so large a portion of our people are in favor of the Crittenden proposition. We must make a stand for those propositions. Ultimately if there seems to be a prospect of their adoption by the free States the border Slave States will pause until an arrangement can be made, but I am satisfied that so soon as it is understood that the free States will not accept the Crittenden proposition, a Southern Confederacy will be formed embracing all the Slave States, & then I fear the reconstruction of the Government will be impossible. . . . I hope Indiana will give every assurance of a willingness to concede & conciliate but still insist under all circumstances that the flag of the Nation shall be sustained.<sup>72</sup>

Holman had the assurances of many citizens of his state that they favored the compromise measures. At a Union meeting held in Aurora, resolutions were adopted which endorsed the proposals and implored the preservation of the Union. A copy of the resolutions was mailed to Holman who sent a letter in reply to John H. Ferry. He stated his pleasure at the position which his neighbors and fellow-citizens had taken at so early a moment and expressed himself in favor of "any reasonable concession to allay the dangerous elements of national ruin which surround



us." In his judgment, "so great a nation as ours cannot be preserved, resting on the strength of public opinion, without the continued exercise of the same wisdom, prudence and moderation by which it was formed, and the same spirit of compromise and concession." He was in favor of "any concession that justice may demand or honor may grant." But he declared that "if this Union cannot be preserved by such SACRIFICES I am still *unwilling* at any time or under any circumstances whatever that this Union shall be dissolved." He viewed the condition of affairs as very alarming, as he saw state after state withdrawing from the Union:

I hear that Mississippi has passed her ordinance of secession. The South may soon become a unit in this disastrous movement and reconstruction may be urged as the only remedy. If reasonable concessions will save the Union, let us make them while the Union still exists. Forbearance and moderation may still, under the Providence of the God of our Fathers, save the Republic which they hoped would endure forever. But let what will come, let us still resolve that the Union shall be preserved. For myself I shall recognize by no vote of mine the right of any State to break up the confederacy or appropriate the property of the whole American people to her exclusive use.<sup>73</sup>

On February 2, 1861, an immense mass meeting was held at Aurora, his home town. Delegations attended from Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana. They deplored the bad feeling that was threatening the perpetuity of the Union and sincerely believed that "the only true course to restore harmony in our community is by a fair and honorable spirit of compromise, concession, and conciliation." They considered the peace, harmony and perpetuity of the national government "of more importance than any questions which have hitherto divided the political parties," and they felt that the time had now come "when all party feeling should be laid aside to promote the good of the country." They endorsed "with pleasure" the Crittenden Compromise "or any fair and honorable plan that will restore the fraternal feelings of our citizens." They hailed with pleasure the large number of Kentuckians at the meeting, and presented to them "the right hand of fellowship, and united in the pledge of continued friendship." No matter what the future held in store, they said,

let Kentucky and Indiana remain irrevocably on the most intimate terms.<sup>74</sup>

A very "original, unique, and effectual mode of preserving the Union" was suggested by the resolutions adopted at this meeting. The delegates declared that "when there is no longer hope of saving the Union," the citizens of Indiana and Kentucky "will not suffer the line of a new confederacy to be drawn between our States, since there is no enmity between us as citizens." They asked that the surrounding states adopt the same rule of action "and by that means kick the line of division between two confederacies eastward into the Atlantic, southward into the Gulf, westward into the Pacific, and northward into Canada."<sup>75</sup>

On January 19, Holman wrote to a Dr. Van Horn, a letter in which he expressed surprise at the slow progress of Union sentiment, "when ruin is so near." He said that the only remedy was in the patriotic impulses of the people. Compromise and concession, he believed, were "certainly preferable to civil war and national destruction." It was his contention that the adoption of the Crittenden amendments would alone restore peace to the country, although they were not satisfactory to the extremists of the North or South, "but they will furnish a solution, and I fear the only solution to the impending difficulties." He said that anything consistent with honor and justice would be far better than disunion and civil war, "and that war to be between men of the same flesh and blood." He considered it his solemn and sworn duty "to resist the secession of a State from the Union, and to insist on the constitutional enforcement of the laws."<sup>76</sup>

In spite of considerable sentiment in favor of compromise, all such measures failed. Southern states continued the process of secession. Organization of the Confederacy was perfected, and the new government was set up at Montgomery, Alabama, in February, 1861. Jefferson Davis of Mississippi became president.

By the middle of January, Holman had conceded that the country was "in the midst of revolution," and he raised the question "whether the Government itself shall continue to exist; whether the Constitution by which it is created possesses the inherent power to resist its own destruction." He again denied the



right of a state to secede from the Union, and declared that such action, "in defiance of right, by a violation of public faith, on pretense of intolerable oppression" would demand "*the constitutional enforcement of the laws.*"<sup>77</sup>

Holman agreed with Buchanan that the federal government had no power to use coercive measures, "either constitutional or material," against the seceding states, but he did believe that the federal laws must be executed, "so far as their execution involves the interests of the whole people." On January 16, 1861, he declared that "no American statesman will question the right of revolution as a remedy for *intolerable oppression*," but he declared also that the federal government had not been oppressive toward the South. Rather, it had been "eminently wise and patriotic and just," he said, "and such will be the verdict of history." He hoped that South Carolina and her sister states "will be wooed back into the sisterhood of States, even in the spirit of maternal kindness," and he saw nothing in the election of Lincoln to the presidency, "however much to be deplored," to justify the secession of the southern states.<sup>78</sup>

In referring to his own state of Indiana, Holman said that "*she will concede and concede and concede, and compromise and compromise and compromise*" to preserve the blessings of a peaceful Union, but "*she will never consent, by her voice, by her acts, or by her silence, that this Union shall be destroyed.*" His language became impassioned when he declared:

When I have stood . . . upon one of those beautiful hills that overhang the waters of the Ohio, and have taken in at a glance the distant hills of Kentucky and Ohio, and of my own native State, descending in fertile valleys to the verge of that noble river; and further off, the waters of the Miami disappearing in the distance, and the whole scene covered with farm-houses and cornfields and green meadows and vineyards and rising villages and prosperous towns; while the tones of cheerful labor, in a thousand voices, swelled up and mingled together, and God's blessed sunlight gilded the whole landscape, I have thought of the darkness and agony of that hour when the storm which our unhallowed passions have been arousing should sweep over the glorious prospect, a messenger of ruin; when the sounds of industry and the cheerful voices of childhood should no longer float on the river, or its waves bear southward the fruits of the labor of many prosperous States; but armed men should march upon its desolated borders, the sounds of war should float upon its waves, reddening with fraternal blood; and its bosom, instead of the

peaceful keel, should bear the munitions of war, and the labor and hopes of years become the prey of the spoiler. And I have felt . . . in my very soul, the value of this peaceful Union, and that that man who should contribute to its destruction would be, of all mortals, from the flood to the final fire, in the sight of God the most guilty.<sup>79</sup>

Commenting on Holman's speech, a Washington correspondent of the New York *World* declared that it was one of the most able arguments he had ever heard and that it was "clear and convincing." He said that Holman's appeal to the South "was one of the most eloquent and effective to which I have had the pleasure of listening."<sup>80</sup>

In the Senate, the Crittenden measure was also supported by "Boss" Bright, who was a little bitter, his biographer claims, "since he felt to the very bottom of his heart that the Democratic Party could have prevented the obviously approaching catastrophe if the people had only left it alone to solve the problem." By this time he had become a strong believer in moderation and in temperate action.<sup>81</sup>

In the meantime, plans were rapidly being made for Lincoln's inauguration on March 4. Holman thought that Lincoln's speeches "& even *willingness* to receive the triumphal receptions along the line of his journey" argued against his possessing the qualities necessary for the crisis.<sup>82</sup> On March 4, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated as President of the United States. He declared his intention to repossess federal property in the South that had been seized by the secessionists and appealed for a reunion of the states in bonds of peace.

Probably the most serious and pressing problem which confronted the new administration was the question as to what should be done with Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor and Fort Pickens in Pensacola Bay. These still were in control of the federal troops. It would be impossible to surrender them to the Confederates, yet they could not be provisioned and re-enforced as they should be if they were attacked by the southerners. President Lincoln merely waited as had Buchanan. Fort Pickens was able to hold out against the Confederates throughout the war, but Fort Sumter was to meet a different fate. Holman felt that the federal government could not consistently with its honor or indeed its continued existence



abandon at the demand of a minority of the American people works of national defense erected for the common defense of the whole country. To have abandoned these works on such a demand would have been an act of perfidy to the majority of the American people & in itself a usurpation of power. I would feed our soldiers at Fort Sumter and leave the result with Providence. I would not *coerce a State* (what fool ever thought or talked of doing so) but I would defend the property of the American people wherever it may be, & sustain the American flag wherever it rightfully waves at every hazzard. . . . But after all one can only pray "God spare our country from dishonor or the horrors of Civil War." While the South marshals her armies, threatens us on every side & taxes our industry . . . assuming indeed the attitude of a foreign and hostile nation, can he be a friend of our country or her honor who councils submission, meekness & forbearance?<sup>83</sup>

Fort Sumter was attacked on April 12. Later Major Anderson surrendered to the Confederate forces. The Civil War had indeed begun. Immediately a thrill of indignation swept over the North. Even those who had been lukewarm toward the controversy before this, now were overwhelmed by a spirit of patriotism which expressed itself in words and deeds supporting the Union. Others, like Douglas and Holman, who had always maintained their loyalty toward the Union, even though at times they disagreed with the policies of the federal government, now came out in opposition to the acts of the seceded states. Holman supported Douglas in his statement: "There are only two sides to the question. Every man must be for the United States government or against it. There can be no neutrals in this war; only patriots or traitors."<sup>84</sup> Other Northern Democrats expressed similar feelings. Benjamin F. Butler, the Massachusetts Democrat who had voted fifty times and more for Jefferson Davis at the Charleston convention, proclaimed:

We will hold him as a brother, him who stands by the Union; we will hold him as an enemy, who would strike from its constellation a single star. . . . Our faces are set South, and there shall be no footstep backwards. . . . THE DAY OF COMPROMISE IS PAST."<sup>85</sup>

Although Holman's activities in the thirty-sixth Congress, like those of the other members of that body, were centered primarily around the impending conflict between the North and the South, he was by no means uninterested in other phases of legislation. As chairman of the Committee on Revolutionary

Claims, he was constantly asking for the unanimous consent of the House to advance bills for the relief of widows and children of certain officers and soldiers of the previous wars in which the United States had engaged. He personally investigated every one of the claims which came before his committee, and whenever he found that the request contained sufficient merit, he demanded that relief should be granted. But he likewise opposed all schemes of doubtful validity. Whenever he found that the claim had some merit, he usually asked that the amount requested be reduced to a more reasonable figure.<sup>86</sup> At other times, when he was convinced that the claim against the government was without merit or fraudulent, he would bitterly oppose it. On May 19, 1860, when a bill for the relief of the legal representatives of Gustavus B. Horner was being presented, Holman arose and uttered the rather cryptic remark, for which he has ever since been noted: "I object."<sup>87</sup>



## CHAPTER V

### A WAR DEMOCRAT

**I**N THE months immediately following the inauguration of President Lincoln, the War Between the States was getting under way in earnest. Both sides were laying their plans for its prosecution. Lincoln called Congress into special session on July 4, 1861, chiefly for the purpose of voting loans and taxes, and authorizing the recruiting of soldiers. The first Battle of Bull Run was fought during that summer, and the defeat of the northern forces persuaded Lincoln to prepare for a long war.

Four days after the session began, Holman introduced a resolution in the House, to which that body agreed, demanding that during the special session, only those bills and resolutions be considered which concerned the military and naval operations of the government, and the financial affairs connected with such matters. The resolution further demanded that all other bills and resolutions be referred to the appropriate committee without debate, to be considered at the next regular session of Congress.<sup>1</sup>

Holman, like many other War Democrats, was not reluctant in casting his vote in favor of the raising of loans and the levying of taxes, which were requested by President Lincoln, but he demanded that the sole object of the government, in its "present and future military operations, resulting from the armed resistance to its authority," should be to maintain the integrity of the Union as established by the Constitution, the enforcement of the laws, and the protection of the constitutional rights of the loyal citizens of every state. He felt that such operations "ought not to be suspended until the authority of the Federal Government shall have been firmly established throughout its territorial limits." He was convinced that the Union should be preserved and he declared that no adjustment of the pending difficulties "can ever be sanctioned by the Government that is not based on the acknowledged integrity of the Union, and the supremacy of the Constitution of the United States."<sup>2</sup>

Holman's attitude toward the war was well expressed in a speech which he made in the House on July 16, 1861 when a bill to increase the efficiency of the volunteer forces was being discussed. He did not attempt to defend or assail Lincoln's administration, but he thought that the time would come when its measures would be passionately considered and scrutinized, "as a people jealous of their freedom will ever scrutinize the acts of their public servants." He believed that "while an enemy almost threatens your Capital . . . and liberty itself is in danger, the public safety may well demand the undivided wisdom and energy of Congress, while patriotism silences the clamor of party strife." He said that he was not the champion of the cause of the administration, he had no part in its triumph, he had resisted its elevation to power, and he did not endorse one principle of its original policy. But he made this pledge:

I will not desert my country or give encouragement to its enemies, because the judgment of the people has been pronounced against the principles I have cherished. I will not desert the old ship because I do not approve of the helmsman. And . . . when, for any cause or from any provocation, bitter and unjust it may be, I shall fail or forget to defend the flag of my country against its enemies at home or abroad, in the language of the old Hebrew king, 'May my right hand forget its cunning.'<sup>3</sup>

He maintained that Lincoln had acted wisely in the defense of the public policy against the actions of the South. If he had not, "the fiery wrath of the people, whose trust he would have betrayed, would have driven him with irresistible fury from your Capital." He declared that forbearance was no longer possible and that the "smouldering volcano must burst forth in its fury. . . . This treason against human hope must be crushed; the Union must be preserved." If Lincoln had assumed questionable powers, "it was at the demand of public opinion," forced by "the overwhelming necessity, the safety of the Union, and above all, the safety of public liberty," because "the safety of the people is the supreme law." Although he had favored adoption of the Crittenden measures he was now "confident that no compromise would have availed." He had come to the belief that "the triumph of the Republican party was not the cause, but the pretence and the occasion for dissolving the Union." War had



become inevitable "by the intemperate ambition of the leaders of public opinion in the South."<sup>4</sup>

The object of the war, he said, should not be vengeance. It was "not for the purpose of conquest or subjugation; not to enlarge the powers of the Government, or increase its territorial limits; not to establish the supremacy of one section of the Union, or to diminish the social or political rights of the other." He declared that the sole and only purpose of the people of the United States in this appeal to arms, "IS TO MAINTAIN THE UNION UNDER THE COMPACTS AND SAFEGUARDS OF THE CONSTITUTION." He believed the purposes of the government were in harmony with those of the people and that "the Government and the people, one and the same, inspired by the same lofty purpose, will join in the same rallying cry, 'the Union . . . must be preserved.'" He maintained that "the Constitution as it is, the Union in its integrity, the reserved rights of every State, and the constitutional rights of every loyal citizen of every State, is the purpose, and the only purpose, which has called more than a quarter of a million of freemen into the field." Therefore, "every consideration of honor, of justice, and of self-preservation compels this appeal to arms." As a Democrat and as a citizen of the dominant section, he would

hail with joy any proposition for compromise and peace coming from the people of the States the wild ambition of whose leaders has plunged the nation into the horrors of civil war, and for the time crushed the Union sentiment of the South. I would insist that the Government should meet such propositions, springing from a returning sense of patriotism and honor, in a spirit of magnanimity, of conciliation and kindness. I would only demand . . . that the misguided people of the South should submit, not to the supremacy of the North, or to the force of military power, or to new forms of government, but to the majesty of the Constitution . . . ; and until that auspicious hour shall come . . . , the Army of the Union, following the flag of the Republic wherever it shall be unfurled, will not, cannot, with honor, return their swords to their scabbards or turn their thoughts upon the sweet blessings of peace.<sup>5</sup>

Holman carried this same line of thought into the next regular session of Congress. On December 4, 1861, he called upon Congress to banish all feeling of mere passion and resentment, insisting that the war was not being waged by the North in any

spirit of oppression, nor for any purpose of conquest or subjugation, nor for the purpose of overthrowing or interfering with the rights or established institutions of the states, but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution and to preserve the Union "with its dignities, equality, and the rights of the several States unimpaired, and that as soon as these objects are accomplished the war ought to cease." The House, however, did not concur with Holman in these sentiments.<sup>6</sup>

One of the most important issues in which Holman was particularly interested was the question of public lands. Holman believed, like other land reformers of the pre-war era, that the public domain should be held in trust by the federal government. The public domain should eventually be disposed of through a policy which would make land easily accessible to the small farmers and actual settlers. While several attempts at a land reform policy had been made before the war, nothing definite was accomplished. In the election of 1860, the homestead question played an important role. The platform of the Republican Party that year protested against any sale or alienation to others of the public lands held by actual settlers. It opposed any view of the free-homestead policy which might regard the settlers as paupers or suppliants for public bounty. It demanded the passage by Congress of a "complete and satisfactory" homestead measure.<sup>7</sup>

The question was discussed fully in the second session of the thirty-seventh Congress. Finally a free-homestead law was enacted by Congress and was signed by President Lincoln on May 20, 1862.<sup>8</sup> The act, which was to take effect on January 1, 1863, provided that any person who was the head of a family or who had reached the age of twenty-one years (exempting from the age limit those who had served in the United States army or navy for at least fourteen days), who was a citizen or had filed declaratory papers, and who had never borne arms against the United States Government or given aid or comfort to its enemies, was entitled to enter a quarter section or less of unappropriated public lands. Such an entry had to be for the purpose of actual settlement and cultivation, and not for speculation. After five years of residence and cultivation, the title to the land was to be issued to the homesteader.<sup>9</sup>



From the beginning of his congressional career, Holman persistently favored a reformed land policy and therefore cast his vote for the measure of 1862.<sup>10</sup> He thought that such a measure would have the effect of counteracting the tendency towards the centralization of wealth in the hands of a few. Such a tendency, he believed, would bring "internal war, seditions and factions." For this reason he gave his "unqualified support" to the homestead measure.<sup>11</sup>

During the debate on this bill, Holman championed the cause of the soldiers. He raised the question whether a homestead policy should be adopted which would apply mainly to persons not in the army, or whether it would not be better to confer those lands upon those persons who were engaged in service in the field. He thought it would be better, considering the financial condition of the country, to confer a bounty in land rather than to appropriate a still larger sum of money for the relief of soldiers.<sup>12</sup> As early as July 8, 1861, he had introduced a bill granting bounty land to certain officers and soldiers engaged in the military service of the United States.<sup>13</sup>

He was in favor of a bounty land policy, he said, because it placed the soldiers in the ranks side by side with the officers. He did not think that any discrimination should be made between officers and privates. He said that he wished to see

all of the defenders of the Republic placed on the same level—*the general and the soldier*—each invited, when the hour of blessed and honorable peace shall come, to beat their swords into ploughshares, and receive from a grateful country an equal expression of gratitude and approval. I am for "free homes for free men," as a wise measure of policy; but at the same time I demand justice for the soldiers of the Republic.<sup>14</sup>

In the thirty-seventh Congress, Holman was a member of the Select Committee on Government Contracts, known as the Van-Wyck Committee, of which Elihu B. Washburne, of Illinois, was chairman. It was feared that fraud and corruption was being carried on in the matter of army supplies. Congress undertook an investigation to determine the truth of these accusations. This inquiry was aimed particularly at Simon Cameron, Lincoln's Secretary of War, a leading politician of Pennsylvania, who, according to Edward Channing, "was generally regarded then

and has been since as a man devoid of scruple when the advancement of his party or himself was concerned. . . ."<sup>15</sup> The House adopted resolutions, introduced by Holman, calling upon Cameron to explain some government contracts which he approved, especially in regard to the territories of Utah and Colorado.<sup>16</sup> Other irregularities were found in the various states.<sup>17</sup>

There were also irregularities in regard to certain railroads in Missouri. The federal government had granted lands to Missouri for railroads, and these lands were subject to disposal by the state legislature for that purpose only. The railroads were to remain public property for the use of the government of the United States, free from all toll or other charge, on the transportation of any property or troops of the United States. Because of the destruction of some bridges, depots, and other railroad property by the war, the roads could no longer carry out the terms of the contracts. Holman reported from the committee that, in view of the public necessities, Congress should authorize the Secretary of War to make such an adjustment with the railroad companies for the transportation of troops and supplies during the war, as might be just and reasonable. However, it was found by the committee that the government was being charged fifty per cent more for such services than the rate paid by private shippers. Consequently, the railroads were realizing enormous profits from the government. Evidence was submitted by Holman from Philip A. Hall, of Chicago, who had been connected for twelve years past with the railroad interests of the country, revealing much fraud in connection with these railroad contracts.<sup>18</sup>

However, Holman was not in favor of having the government take over and run the railroads through military agencies. He thought that would result in an enormous extravagance of expenditure upon the part of the government. He felt that it would be better to pay the roads more than the actual expense of the service, than to have the government take them over, "with the usual extravagance of government enterprise."<sup>19</sup>

The published report of the VanWyck Committee on Government Contracts contained about eleven hundred pages. *Leslie's Weekly* said that:



Fraud, falsehood, and favoritism [were exposed on every one of its pages]. . . . It is a sickening catalogue of vessels bought by the Government agents, through the intervention of third parties, straw men, at twice and three times their value, the difference between the actual cost and the price charged to the Government going into the pocket of the agent; it tells how contracts for cattle were given out to favorites or parasites, men utterly unacquainted with the purchase of cattle, at prices so exorbitant that they were turned over, half an hour afterwards, to practical dealers, at such prices as to enable the favorites to realize from \$10,000 to \$40,000 by a single stroke of the pen.<sup>20</sup>

Corruption was found in every phase of the government service. General William Tecumseh Sherman wrote that "even in this time of trial, cheating in clothes, blankets, flour, bread, everything, is universal."<sup>21</sup>

Recurring to the part that Simon Cameron played in the graft connected with war contracts, Holman's committee censured the policy of the Secretary of War in placing Dr. Alexander Cummings in charge of purchasing war supplies in New York City. Holman submitted a resolution charging Cameron with gross irregularities. It appears that Cummings, formerly a newspaper editor in Philadelphia, went to New York shortly before the outbreak of the war, and became connected with the *New York World*. He had no business experience and no experience in connection with military supplies. There were in New York at that time the usual number of men engaged in the public service, in the military departments, many of them distinguished public servants, whose integrity had never been called in question. Nevertheless, Cameron had placed Cummings in control of \$2,000,000 to be expended in New York City, without restriction or limit, in the purchase of military supplies. No security, bond or oath was ever required of Cummings for the proper application of the sum placed at his disposal.

The committee proposed to censure Cameron for his actions, not only with regard to the situation in New York, but also in connection with his sanction of certain so-called nefarious relations between the War Department and various railroads, particularly in Pennsylvania, which were engaged in the transportation of military supplies. Both Cameron and his Assistant Secretary, Thomas A. Scott, were from Pennsylvania. Scott himself was vice-president of the Pennsylvania Central Railroad and

received salaries both from the government and the railroad. Cameron, his family, and friends owned the controlling interest in the North Central Railroad. Holman charged that the employment of Scott had cost the government hundreds of thousands of dollars. The committee showed that the government was paying at least thirty-three per cent more than was being paid by private parties for the same transportation of freight. The result of placing the government at the mercy of the railroads was estimated as follows:

From eight hundred thousand to a million dollars is the increase of the earnings of the North Central during the current year—nearly fifty per cent over that of the former year; and upon the other road—the Pennsylvania Central—there has been an enormous increase of \$1,350,235. The effect of all this has been to almost double the fair cost to the Government of transportation upon all these thoroughfares.<sup>22</sup>

Holman charged that as the result of such manipulations, corporations and officials had fattened, but the nation had grown poor. He declared that in the employment of Cummings, in regulating the cost and conditions of transportation, in making and consummating government contracts, and in other such practices, Cameron, for the purpose of advancing the private interests of himself, his friends, and his family, had sacrificed the grave public interest committed to his keeping. During all this time, he said, the *New York World*, under Cummings, admired and sustained the administration of Cameron.

The contracts made by Cameron amounted to about \$46,164,665. Under these contracts, twenty dollars apiece was paid for Springfield rifles. The total sum, according to Holman, was \$7,500,000 over and above a legitimate and honest profit of \$3.00 on each rifle. Holman bitterly assailed

this wide-spread corruption and the hordes of sharpers and brokers and ex-members of Congress and bankers and stock jobbers and blood-suckers and plunderers who gathered instinctively around the Secretary of War for the purpose of plundering this Government and robbing the people.  
...<sup>23</sup>

There were contracts for arms, Holman said, exceeding thirty millions of dollars, which were made with persons "*who are not*



*manufacturers of arms, or dealers in arms, and who have no connection with the business at all, but mere brokers."* The contracts had been given, he said, to mere politicians and brokers, even though

no officer of the Ordinance Bureau, which is authorized to purchase arms, deemed the contracts necessary. No mortal man, except Simon Cameron and his Assistant Secretary and the contractors themselves, can explain the reason why these contracts were made. These are the contracts that make the tax bill groan.<sup>24</sup>

On the basis of the investigation and reports of the Van Wyck Committee, the House adopted a resolution on April 30, 1862, censuring Simon Cameron for his malfeasance in office. On May 26, 1862, President Lincoln, in a special message to Congress, assumed full responsibility for Cameron's actions. Years later, in the forty-third Congress, a resolution was introduced, and later adopted, "That this House, as an act of personal justice to Mr. Cameron and as a correction of its own records, hereby directs that [the censure of 1862] . . . be rescinded."<sup>25</sup> Holman himself spoke in favor of rescinding the former action of the House. He would "not for one perpetuate the memory of the unhappy events of that period" of intestine war. He would "blot out its animosities and smooth down its asperities and rescind its unpleasant records where justice would permit." He declared that "in the midst of peace, and now happily remote from the haste and passion incident to a state of war, we may well carefully review any harsh judgments we have pronounced." He maintained that the American people could "well afford to invite and cultivate an era of good feeling in public affairs, 'with malice toward none, and charity for all.'" Therefore, he was convinced that,

in view of the turbulent and disordered period when this resolution was adopted, rendering a mistake the more possible; in view of the long period which has elapsed, during all of which the gentleman whose public reputation is involved has been identified with the councils of the nation; in view, too, and in deference to the wishes of the gentlemen around me, Democrats and Republicans, representing Pennsylvania constituencies; and because . . . I am willing that the asperities of the war, the heart-burnings, and bitter memories, so far as may be, may fade into oblivion,

I . . . for one will not object to the adoption of this rescinding resolution.<sup>26</sup>

While a member of the VanWyck Committee, Holman also found evidences of what he considered fraud in the administration of the Navy Department. Admitting the integrity of Secretary Gideon Welles, he questioned whether Welles was justified in employing his brother-in-law, Governor Edwin Denison Morgan of New York, a merchant-millionaire, to purchase vessels to an unlimited extent and to receive a commission of two and one-half per cent from the seller. He asked "if the tendency of that policy is to promote public virtue and integrity and secure a rigid adherence to the best interests of the country upon the part of our public agents?" He said sarcastically:

While the citizen soldiers are imperiling, not simply their fortunes but their lives, to sustain the honor and integrity of their country, to uphold the flag of the Republic on the land and the wave, leaving the endearments of home and of wife and of children, and meeting all the deadly perils of war on the battlefield, or the bloody deck of the man-of-war, for less than \$200 per year, with wife and children demanding bread, the Navy Department, Gideon Welles, its Secretary, places in the hands of a member of his own household, of his own family, commissions to the enormous amount of \$95,000 for five months' ordinary services, \$70,000 of which he admits.<sup>27</sup>

Such a policy as this, Holman said, was not calculated to promote economy. It would have the effect of bringing about or enlarging a system of commission and corrupt brokerages in every branch of the public service. Even the heads of subordinate bureaus and the clerks would be justified in receiving severally their corrupt commissions. He felt that in no government had a more terrible blow been struck at public virtue. Gideon Welles could not have injured his country more than by such a policy. It would have been better, he said, had Morgan been paid a salary of \$150,000 by the government, rather than that such a system of plundering should be inaugurated by an agent of the government.<sup>28</sup>

In conclusion, Holman established the principle which was to govern his activities throughout the remainder of his long service in Congress:



I am determined to denounce the plunderers of the Treasury. When the living masses of the people, who are not willing to sell their birthright of freedom for gold or silver, are gathering in countless numbers around the temple of the Republic, and with unselfish and earnest purpose are pressing forward with giant strength to steady its tottering pillars, I am not willing that the crawling robbers shall sap the foundations of its strength. With five thousand of my own brave and true constituents in the field meeting every peril of war, I will not remain silent when thieves and robbers attempt to undermine the pillars of the State. I invoke the censure of the House upon their heads.<sup>29</sup>

Holman's private feelings in the matter were contained in a letter of January 17, 1862 to Allen Hamilton. He mentioned the fact that "since the commencement of the present Session of Congress and indeed since the first of September last, I have been acting more in the capacity of a Commissioner to take testimony, with a miscellaneous authority than as a Member of Congress." Most of his time had been occupied with the investigations of the Van Wyck Committee. He described these activities:

During the summer & fall we were at New York, Washington, St. Louis, Cairo, & Chicago, and a part of the Committee at Philadelphia, Boston, New Haven & Harrisburgh, and during the partial adjournment over the holidays I was actively employed at Cincinnati during almost every moment. The effects of the labor of this Committee will not generally be seen by the public, for in most cases we aimed rather to inform the Departments and suspend contracts or secure the withholding of money by the Treasury Department than with a view to the action of Congress. We ascertained the extraordinary profligacy of public expenditure at St. Louis, secured a suspension of further payments until examinations were made by a Commission & this will undoubtedly result in the saving of some millions of money. . . . And in divers other instances, large sums of money amounting to millions in the aggregate have been withheld until the final action of the House & the Committee. . . . Unless the expenses of the Government can be reduced we shall be driven to national bankruptcy.<sup>30</sup>

In Holman's judgment, about one-fourth of the expenditures incurred could have been avoided by reasonable efforts at economy, but Cameron manifestly winked at, if he did not actively participate in, "the most infinite, complicated and infamous system of plunder that ever dishonored any nation." Holman thought that Lincoln was "an honest, but a feeble & vascillating

[sic] man." He said that Lincoln lacked the energy, earnestness, comprehension, views and experience necessary for the crisis.<sup>31</sup>

In the next Congress, Holman introduced a resolution which directed the Secretary of War to inform the House whether any payments had been made to the Illinois Central, the Burlington and Missouri, or the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad companies, for transporting troops and property of the United States. He wanted to know the amount paid.<sup>32</sup> He also asked for an inquiry into what contracts had been made without advertising for proposals as directed by law; why the law had not been complied with; and why the parties charged with frauds against the government had not been brought to trial before the proper tribunals. He thought that such action was necessary so that the people might have the confidence that public officers charged with official misconduct to the public injury would be punished. Unless that confidence could be secured in the public mind, he said that

every department of the Government must languish, and the Government will lose that popular sanction necessary to a successful administration of public affairs. At a time like this public confidence in the honesty and integrity of the Government is of the first importance. . . . So far as I am concerned, I do not ask that this resolution shall be passed for any party or partisan purpose, nor do I seek the investigation merely for the purpose of affecting the Administration in power. I am controlled . . . by a sense of public duty, in seeking to arrest the speculation and fraud which now prey upon the country.<sup>33</sup>

Holman was a firm believer in the rights of the states as opposed to the tendency toward concentration in the hands of the federal government. When a certain bill was being considered by the House, which would give the President the power to fill vacancies among the officers of the volunteer regiments commissioned by the state governors, Holman denounced it as a policy which would be "dangerous to public liberty without any conceivable benefit to the public service." He saw no reason why the authority of the President should be increased. He denounced it as an invasion of state rights. He was against consolidating the government. This policy, he thought, was unjust, inexpedient, and unconstitutional.<sup>34</sup>

Of course, Holman was not alone in this idea. The Demo-



cratic opposition had maintained from the beginning of Lincoln's administration that the powers of the President should not be increased. They viewed with alarm any tendency toward the granting of additional powers to the Chief Executive. They realized, naturally, that the war could not be carried on efficiently without such an increase, but they feared that such power would be used for selfish political purpose and not for the general welfare. It was also feared that, once the increase was granted it would be difficult, if not impossible, to withdraw such powers when peace should return to the country.

Holman's attitude on this measure was similar to his opposition to a bill which came before the third session of this Congress on February 19, 1863. This was a bill "to indemnify the President and other persons for suspending the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, and other acts done in pursuance thereof." Holman found only two radical objections to the bill. The first was that "it oppressed the injured citizen, whose personal liberty had been trampled on by arbitrary power," by authorizing the removal of the action he might bring in the vindication of his rights from the state to the federal courts, and allowed the unjust defense that his imprisonment was in good faith, under the authority of the President or under an act of Congress, and was to be received as a full answer to the action. He also opposed it on the ground that the bill operated as a permanent, perpetual suspension of the habeas corpus which was restrictive only on arbitrary and despotic power. He thought it was an ex-post-facto law and that it conferred on the President of the United States power conferred by the Constitution on Congress alone.

Had the President exercised the arbitrary power of suspending the writ of habeas corpus only in sections of the Union where treason was in the ascendant, and the courts and the civil authority suspended, argued Holman, the claim of actual necessity and the public safety might be considered. But such was not the case. The writ had been suspended where the great mass of the people were loyal and where the authority of the civil power was unimpaired. To Holman, this was an "unwarrantable distrust of the people, and unjust suspicion of their loyalty." He feared that any opposition to the bill would be met by the charge

of disloyalty and sympathy with traitors, although he said that such a charge would be "wicked, impolitic and unjust." If the charge were true, "the nation must perish; but it is infamously false." In condemning the bill, he said:

In spite of this Administration, and its mad and reckless policy; in spite of its weakness and its vacillations; in spite of those who control for the hour the affairs of the nation; in spite of their bitter partisanism; their heartless disregard of a bleeding country in pressing forward their partisan measures from the beginning to the present hour; in spite of insult and unmerited reproach, still true to their country and the memory of its patriots who have fallen in its defense, the Democratic party, knowing that the Republic . . . is not the President and his Cabinet, creatures of an hour, but that it is the Government of the living people, the only hope for themselves and their children, have never wavered or hesitated in its support and defense, or in supporting the flag, . . . accounting its enemies its own. They have, so far as concerned the support of the Government, yielded up party to the country.<sup>35</sup>

Holman insisted that the Democratic Party had always been loyal to the Union. He for one, while he always opposed the partisan measures of the Republican Party, had supported every measure which was necessary to the effective prosecution of the war. Every proposition to sustain the government, in men or money, had received his and the Democratic Party's "uninterrupted and cordial and most unanimous support." He charged that the Republican Party had sought to carry on the war, not to restore the Union, but for the purpose of carrying out, at every cost of life and treasure, the partisan dogmas of that party. Yet he still hoped that the American people, "rising above the weakness of this temporary Administration," would solemnly resolve that, "cost what it may of life or treasure, the Union *shall be maintained*."<sup>36</sup>

Throughout the war, Holman was persistent in his efforts to aid the soldier. It was his belief that the man who had served in the Union army was deserving of the best his country could offer. While he was demanding retrenchment in the expenditure of money for all other purposes, he was constantly demanding that the government increase the pay of the soldiers and extend the bounty benefits to them. When the pay of private soldiers was \$13.00 per month Holman wished to increase it to \$15.00. At the same time he wished to reduce the salaries of of-



ficers of the army not actually engaged in active service in the field to a point which would not impair the efficiency of the public service. He also desired to have the soldiers who had served less than two years secure partial benefits from the \$100.00 bounty.<sup>37</sup> He felt that because of the depreciation of the currency, the \$15.00 per month would not be any greater than the former pay. He said that the government

should hold up to our soldiers the assurance that the nation is dealing justly and humanely with them, is not forgetful of their sacrifices, and that neither themselves nor their wives and little ones at home will perish or suffer from want of the protecting care of the nation, or from its penury on the one hand, or as the effects of its profligacy on the other. Let us economize elsewhere, and not at the expense of the woe and sorrow of the true patriot and his family.<sup>38</sup>

Holman also believed that expenditures in connection with the diplomatic and consular services of the government could be reduced. There had been a steady increase in these appropriations. Under the Buchanan administration, these expenses were considered "enormously and unnecessarily high." The figure had been greatly increased under Lincoln. In spite of the loss in foreign exchange, Holman felt that the times were not propitious for such an increase because of the diminished commerce of the country. He said:

No man, within the history of our legislation, has ever before seen the spectacle of an Administration increasing the number of consuls when, by reason of the falling off of our commerce, their duties have decreased. The administration of Mr. Buchanan was denounced bitterly by the party now in power for its extravagance in creating consuls for the purpose of providing for its pets and partisans. Yet, the Republicans no sooner come into office than they do, to an unlimited extent, the very thing which they denounced. In order to take care of his partisans, who cannot be provided for elsewhere, the President has been authorized without restraint to increase the number of consuls. . . . It strikes me that it looks like anything else than a correspondence between the denunciations of the Republican party in 1860 and its practice in 1862. . . . Is it not a strange record for the party which came into power upon the platform of retrenchment and reform?<sup>39</sup>

Another bill was denounced by Holman. This was the bill for the construction of a ship canal for the passage of armed

naval vessels from the Mississippi River through Illinois to Lake Michigan, and for the enlargement of the locks of the Erie and the Oswego canal in New York. Holman thought that such a scheme in addition to draining a large sum from the treasury, was full of danger to the future of the country. He claimed that this measure

in its partiality, in the injustice it works to some sections of the Union, in its untimely draft upon the public treasury—every dollar of which is now needed for other and more pressing emergencies—in arraying State against State in the interests of trade and commerce, will tend more to destroy the friendly relations of different sections of the Union than anything which has happened in the life time of the Republic.<sup>40</sup>

Holman read resolutions which had been adopted by the legislatures of Ohio and Indiana, protesting against the bill, largely on the ground of the huge expenditures which would be necessary for the project, money which should be spent for the payment of the current expenses of the government and the prosecution of the war. These resolutions expressed the sentiment that the policy of the government should be to confine its expenditures strictly to the absolute necessities and to suspend all proposed improvements and other enterprises that were not immediately necessary in the prosecution of the war. The bill was finally defeated in the House, with Holman voting with the opponents.<sup>41</sup>

When the civil appropriation bills came before Congress, Holman always opposed particular items which he thought were either not necessary or were mere attempts to “raid” the treasury. This was particularly true in the matter of appropriations for the botanic gardens at Washington. As a member of the Committee on Agriculture, he came into rather close contact with this branch of the government. He had come to the conclusion that many things had been attempted by the Department of Agriculture which were useless and did not contribute to the general benefit of agriculture. Whenever a bill for the expenditure of money for such items came before Congress, he was found on the side of opposition.<sup>42</sup> He opposed the improvement of the grounds of the botanic gardens and favored a reduction in the items for the collecting of agricultural and rural



economy, and the procurement, propagation, and distribution of seeds and cuttings. He also favored a reduction in the item for the use of the General Land Office, because the work of the office had been diminished by more than one-half.<sup>43</sup>

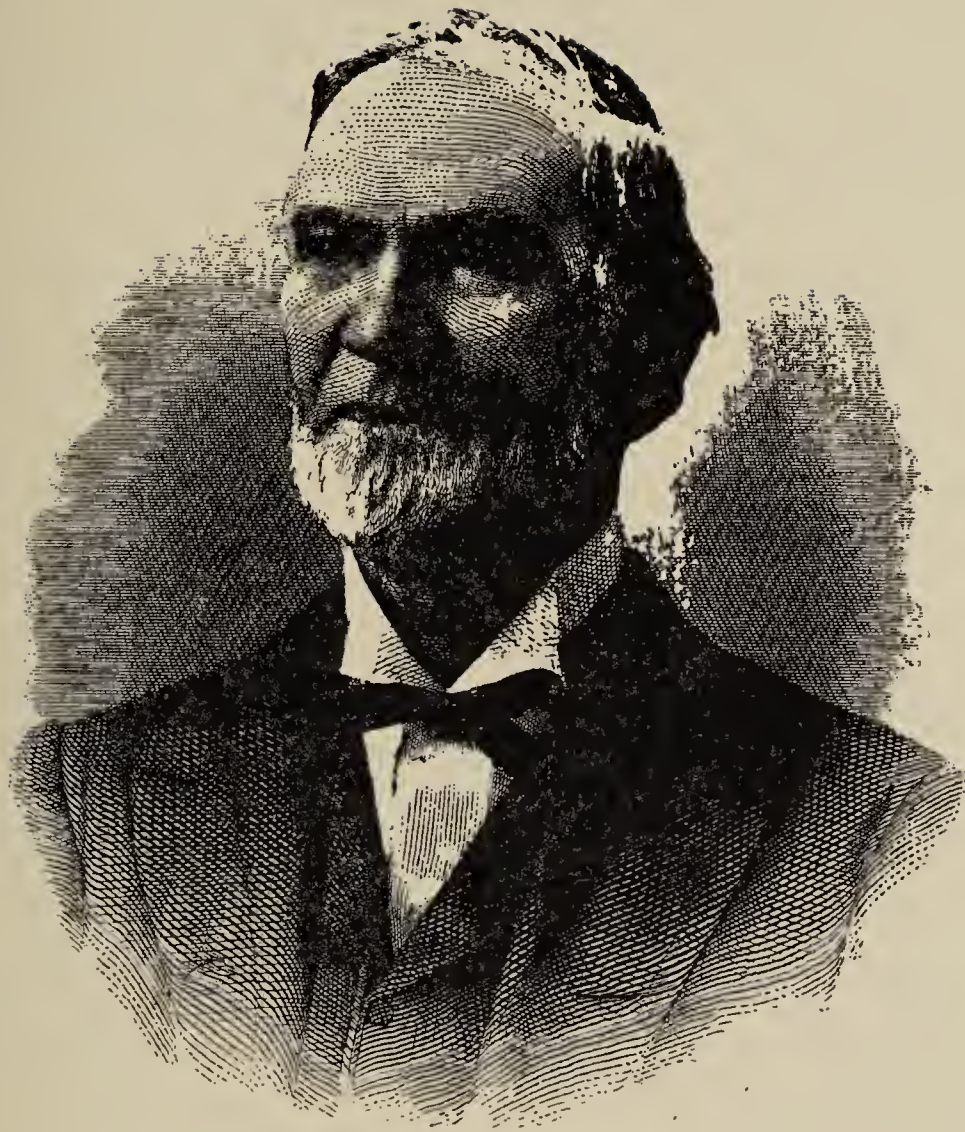
On a few occasions it appears that Holman was forced by circumstances to desert his traditional policy. The following incident told by a relative is revealing:

The family ties once proved embarrassing to Judge Holman when he introduced in the House of Representatives a bill to compensate my grandfather's firm for the loss of some barges which were burned by government troops to keep them from falling into the hands of Morgan's men. Either Puck or Judge published a cartoon of Holman "The Watch-dog of the Treasury" presenting this bill to Uncle Sam, and saying, "This is different, Sam, I've got to pay for my daughter-in-law's barges. . . ."<sup>44</sup>

Holman also championed a cause which was unpopular in some quarters, but which gained him many votes from his constituents. In 1863, the Confederate General John Hunt Morgan invaded Indiana from Kentucky, raiding parts of Holman's district. Morgan insisted that many persons turn over to him horses, cattle and other property which his army so sorely needed. Then the owners of the confiscated property placed their claims for payment against the federal government in the hands of Holman. They became his staunch supporters.<sup>45</sup>

One of the major problems which faced the thirty-seventh Congress was the question of emancipation. During 1862 Lincoln urged that Congress adopt his proposal for gradual compensated emancipation and the colonization of free negroes. There was opposition in some quarters to the President's demands. The question was raised as to the constitutionality of such a measure. Holman thought that Lincoln's program was confiscation in spite of the compensation feature and therefore an unconstitutional invasion of state rights. He denied that Congress had any power to liberate the slaves. War, he said, does not enlarge the powers of Congress, "but the Constitution is the same in peace and in war. In the midst of great public commotions its limitations are of more importance than in peace." He claimed that he was

no apologist for slavery. I know of no argument in its favor. If the aboli-



William Steele Holman

A steel engraving of Congressman Holman, as he appeared toward the close of his long career in Congress, which extended almost continuously from 1868 to 1897.



tion of slavery was within your power, and would contribute to restore and give stability to the Government without adding to the inhumanity of war or affecting recognized rights of loyal citizens, I would give the approval of my whole heart and judgment to the emancipation and colonization of every slave of every rebel master. But while the Government maintains with safety—*that the Constitution is still supreme and embraces every State*—I cannot and will not consent to an act in defiance of its authority. I have . . . ever denied the right of secession; in my judgment, South Carolina and the other States are States of the Union, and the Constitution is still the same over all.<sup>46</sup>

Holman believed such a policy of emancipation, independent of the constitutional objection, would be unwise. It would not promote the interests of mankind. The rebellion was produced by the dishonest pretense that the government was preparing to abolish slavery, and this act of power, thought Holman, would confirm the falsehood and alienate every man of the South. It would destroy the hope of restoring the Union. The war would become not one for the Union, but a war of subjugation. He saw no good coming from such a policy. It would divide northern opinion and weaken the strength of the army. This was no time, he said, for experiments. He had supported, and would continue to support, every just measure of the administration to restore the Union. No partisan interest would control him when the Republic was in danger. But he would not be deterred from condemning this or any other measure which would tend to defeat the hope of a restoration of the Union. He concluded:

I will not . . . hesitate in the support of the cause of constitutional liberty in which they [the northern soldiers] have perished. If the purpose of the war shall be changed to a war upon the institutions of the States, and to reduce them to provinces, I shall almost despair of the Republic. But I do not despair. I have abiding faith in the constancy of the people. Let their voice be heard above the clamor of passion for the old guarantees of their liberty, the old landmarks of the Republic, and with the noble efforts of your citizens in arms, with wise and moderate counsels, and the blessings of Heaven, we may indulge the confident belief that the sacrifices and sufferings of the nation will be more than compensated by the restoration of the fabric of the Union in all of its original beauty and strength. Courage and moderation, and fortitude and patience, inspired by the good genius of the Republic, will triumph.<sup>47</sup>

Holman did not agree with those members of Congress who

would repeal the Fugitive Slave Law. He consistently voted against every such proposal. A congressional leader favoring such a repeal was Holman's colleague, George W. Julian, of Indiana, who on December 20, 1862, offered a resolution instructing the Judiciary Committee to report a bill so amending the Act of 1850 as to forbid the recapture and return of fugitives from labor without proof first being made by the claimant of loyalty to the government. Holman promptly moved to table this resolution, but his motion failed and the resolution carried. In the following June, however, Julian proposed that the Judiciary Committee be instructed to report a bill repealing the Fugitive Slave Act, but when Holman moved to table the question, his motion was carried.<sup>48</sup>

Holman's attitude in regard to emancipation was expressed in several letters written to Allen Hamilton. Early in 1862, Holman wrote:

The recent victories inspire great hope among Union men here that we shall be able not only to put down the rebellion, but retain the present form of Government unchanged, although with every victory the determination of the extreme men of the Republican party to put an end to slavery as the great evil is more and more manifest. Yet the conservative element is also becoming more determined. There is of course great danger that the tests to which the Constitution has been exposed will eventuate in an increase of Federal power. Ultimately this may be found inevitable, but it is full of danger & is a step in the direction from which we have come & leads right back to the old idea that the strength of a Government depends on a centralization of its powers. I do not believe our experience warrants the belief that the Government of separate States under a general Constitution with only strictly national powers, is in any sense a failure.<sup>49</sup>

As to the financial schemes of the country, Holman thought that they would do for the present, but was afraid that the reliance of the government on paper would finally militate against economy. He warned that

if you who are at home do not promptly rebuke the reckless extravagance which pervades every Department of this Administration we shall break down under our enormous debt. The people must elect a Congress on the issue of economy or we are financially ruined. . . . The party in power seems to act on the idea that a public debt is a blessing. My only hope is that when the people become so conscious of a heavy taxation



they will awake to the necessity of economy. Honest Old Abe has spent at the public expense \$13,000 more on his White House than was ever before expended in one year & so it is all through the Government.<sup>50</sup>

In a later letter he declared:

You have undoubtedly noticed the tendency on the part of the radical members of both branches of Congress to inaugurate extreme measures on the subject of slavery as our army advances. Every victory excites new apprehensions that the South may submit to the National Authority and the Union be restored under the old guarantees of the Constitution. It is this apprehension that forces forward these extreme measures which have so excited and alarmed the true union men of the border States. I can assure you that there is a very large party in Congress that would prefer a final division of the Union rather than the Union should be restored under the present Constitution with the institution of slavery still existing. I am not certain but that this party is sufficiently strong to control both branches of Congress.<sup>51</sup>

Holman then reviewed the military situation. The advance on Richmond, he said, had been less successful than was expected. General Henry W. Halleck, he charged, "stands before Corinth so long that apprehension for the time suspends fanaticism, which is ever timid and fearful in danger, and bold and arrogant in success." He thought that if the North achieved a victory, or the enemy fled before Halleck, the confiscation bill would pass, and the "President will remain silent forever over General Hunter's proclamation."<sup>52</sup> In confidence Holman wrote: "I have never . . . regarded the country in greater danger. In victory we must fear measures which will crush out the Union feeling of the South; in defeat we must fear, in view of the increasing inclemency of the southern climate, a protraction of that vigor in our army which has won the recent victories."<sup>53</sup>

It was understood in Washington that the President was "greatly exercised" over the Hunter Proclamation. Holman felt that:

If he repudiates the act, he loses the cordial support of the extreme men of his party and for the time suspends operations in that division of the army. If he does not he arrays against him the men of the border States who up to this time have sustained him. . . . The conservative men here in the House to the number of about fifty are trying to cooperate together, but the absence of a common organization renders their cooper-

ation uncertain. The Northern Democrats are generally hostile to Lincoln while the Union men of the South wish to sustain him. The Democrats control no patronage while the Union men of the border control the patronage of their States, so you see the absence of a common intent and common animosities destroy the unity of their action. Yet on the mere question of slavery they will in the main act in concert.<sup>54</sup>

In the meantime, the campaign for seats in the thirty-eighth Congress was getting under way. At first Holman was somewhat reluctant to enter the lists again. He was not certain about the condition of public opinion in his district. The Union movement had, he felt, or would have if carried out in good faith, a good deal of strength. He thought he could carry the district "if fairly in the field. But I should not willingly abandon my old political convictions."<sup>55</sup> However, he not only won the nomination, but also the election in the fall of 1862.

Three months before the last session of the thirty-seventh Congress convened and following the retreat of General Robert E. Lee across the Potomac and back into Virginia, after the Battle of Antietam, President Lincoln issued his famous Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862. He announced that, as a war measure, "all persons held as slaves within any State, or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free" after January 1, 1863. It was his hope that before that date, the southern states would have returned to the Union.

This proclamation became a thorn in the side of Lincoln during the sessions of the thirty-eighth Congress. Hostility was directed toward the measure, especially in the northwest, by men who were eager to fight for the Union, but not for the freedom of the negro. In the fall elections of 1862, many of the northern states went over to the Democratic Party. In the thirty-eighth Congress, therefore, sat a group of "unterrified and intensely bitter Democrats," elected on the platform that the war was a failure and ought to be stopped. Among these were George H. Pendleton of Ohio and "Sunset" Cox, once characterized as a pair of the "hardest Congressional opponents and critics that any Republican could hope to meet." Two others "of equal pugnacity" were Daniel W. Voorhees and Holman.<sup>56</sup>



Holman became a leader of the Northern Democrats in the thirty-eighth Congress. In a series of resolutions, he condemned the doctrine that the states of the Confederacy were out of the Union and should be held, on the ultimate defeat of the insurrection, as territories or subjugated provinces, and governed by the absolute will of Congress and the president, or restored to the Union on conditions unknown to the Constitution of the United States. He thought that such a doctrine was unjust to the loyal citizens of those states and tended to prolong the war and to confirm the treasonable theory of secession. If such a doctrine were carried into effect, he said, it would greatly endanger the public liberty and the constitutional powers and rights of all the states, by centralizing and consolidating the powers of the government, state and national, in the federal executive. He again insisted that the only object of the war was the subjugation of the armed insurrection and the re-establishment of the Constitution, with the dignity, equality, and rights of the several states unimpaired. As soon as those objects were accomplished, the war should cease. He favored all necessary and proper appropriations of money by Congress for the support of the military and naval forces of the government, and all measures of legislation necessary to increase and promote the efficiency of the army and navy, and to maintain the public credit, so that "through a vigorous prosecution of the war, peace on the basis of the Union of the States and the supremacy of the Constitution may be the more speedily obtained."<sup>57</sup>

When the naval appropriations bill was under discussion in the House, Holman and his group opposed the increase of expenditures. They found that the government had been keeping up and enlarging so many of the navy yards unnecessarily, as they said, that the expense had become enormous. A study had been made of the expenses of the navy for previous years, and it was found that, as late as 1860, the appropriation was but \$12,000,000; in 1862, it was \$30,456,294; in 1863, it was \$42,741,336; and in 1864 it was \$92,713,205. Now the Secretary of the Navy was asking for \$142,618,785, a "sum double the whole expenditure at the close of the last Administration." There was no assurance that this enormous increase would not continue. Holman failed to see any corresponding benefit from this in-

crease, although, as a matter of fact, an effective blockade had been established which did much to overcome the Confederacy.

It was true, as Holman claimed, that American commerce, as such, was virtually crippled and destroyed, but actually this was because American ships had been enrolled under flags of other nations. He criticized the inefficiency of Secretary Welles, to whom, because of "the want of ability, or at least ability of the proper kind, . . . are to be attributed the misfortunes to our commerce, and the want of life and vigor and activity to that branch of the public service." He felt that the Navy Department, with a proper head, could not fail to be effective.<sup>58</sup>

The following day, Welles confided to his *Diary* that "a spicy debate" had sprung up on the passage of the navy bill. He wrote that Holman, whom he called a "Copperhead partisan," had made an attack upon him, which he characterized as "sprawling, personally vituperative, and abusive."<sup>59</sup> Of course Holman and his followers, being in the minority, could not block the passage of the bill, but their charges did bring to the attention of Congress and the people what some considered weaknesses in Lincoln's administration.

During the session of Congress, Holman opposed pay increases to various government employees, among them the police of the City of Washington. Such opposition failed to take into account a great increase in the cost of living in the nation's capital. A bill had been introduced to increase the pay of the police fifty per cent, but Holman saw no good reason for such an increase to \$60.00 per month, even though the pay for the Capitol police was \$100.00. He said that was the usual argument used in increasing salaries; just because one group of employees had their salary raised was no good reason why every other group should be so favored, especially while the soldiers were receiving a much lower salary. He thought that while the government was struggling for its life, such a demand should not be made.<sup>60</sup>

Holman also objected to increasing the salary of the Secretary of the Treasury from \$5,000 to \$6,000. He called the party in power to task for abandoning its pledge of economy. Although various elements in the country were growing richer, due, in many cases, to profiteering in the war, he saw the nation as a whole growing poorer. "Since God created the heavens and



the earth," he said, "there has never been such a disregard of the expenditure of the public treasure for unnecessary purposes" as was exhibited by this Republican Congress.<sup>61</sup>

An item in the revenue bill of 1864 was of particular concern to Holman. Thaddeus Stevens, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, proposed to raise the tax on spiritous liquors from twenty to sixty cents per gallon. Holman believed that a tax of forty cents would be just, but anything higher would be unfair to the great corn-growing states which would be most affected by this tax. There was quite a debate as to whether whiskey in the storehouses should carry this extra tax, or only that manufactured after the passage of the bill. Holman, Pendleton, Samuel J. Randall of Pennsylvania, Francis P. Blair, Jr., of Missouri, and James Kelley and Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania were among those who voted with the majority to defeat this provision, while James A. Garfield of Ohio, George W. Julian of Indiana, and Elihu B. Washburne of Illinois voted in favor of it. Charges of trickery were heard from various sources.<sup>62</sup>

Holman bitterly assailed the tax as being oppressive on the small distillers. He spoke for the interests directly involved. His own district was largely interested in the subject. When a reasonable tax was laid on the distillers among his constituents, they paid it without complaint. He said they were an enterprising and patriotic body of men. But such a tax would force them to suspend operations. They had paid during the current year \$700,000 of tax on manufactured spirits which was, according to Holman, a larger duty than had been paid by any other congressional district, on this particular article. Holman was in the minority, and the tax was levied.<sup>63</sup>

A rather interesting sidelight on Holman's retrenchment policy is found in his attitude toward an appropriation bill for the upkeep of the White House. He called attention to the manner in which such appropriations had swelled, read items from the appropriation measure, and cited a total figure of \$58,000.<sup>64</sup>

Making use of a bit of sarcasm, Holman compared this figure with that of an appropriation for the same purpose during the "corrupt and dishonest Administration" (according to Republicans) of Buchanan, which was \$20,000. Holman called the attention of the House to the fact that the lower figure was ap-

propriated "at the outgoing of a very extravagant Administration and upon the incoming of a very extravagant Administration." He charged the government under Lincoln with corruption and dishonesty, though it was believed that such charges against the Buchanan Administration "had more to do with bringing the present party into power than anything else."<sup>65</sup>

A bill came before the House in 1864 which authorized the President to appoint two commissioners whose duty would be to collect together certain stray bands of Winnebago and Pottawatomie Indians and transport them from Wisconsin to their tribal homes in Kansas and the Dakotas. It was Holman's belief that such a proposal was out of harmony with the humanitarian theories then prevailing in the country in regard to the negro. He thought that if the condition of the Indian were to be improved, he must be brought under the influence of civilization and subjected to the restraints and moral forces of civilized society. This was the theory applied to the negro, he said. What was worse, the Indian was to be removed by military force. He thought it would be better to try to humanize and civilize these Indians, to make them proper inhabitants of a civilized community, than by the sword and the bayonet to drive them out, and to remove them beyond all the influences of civilization, and consign them to the life of the barbarian and savage.<sup>66</sup>

Another bill would amend the Homestead Law of 1862. Holman introduced an amendment, providing that in the case of soldiers and sailors who had served the country for two years, the title to the land should be granted after one year's residence, instead of the five years which were required under the 1862 law. It was rejected. Holman thought the soldier should be as well treated by Congress as the railroad and land speculator:

During the last and also during the preceding Congress, you appropriated millions of acres of the public domain to these vast corporations. You will appropriate millions more during the present session of Congress, from all indications, for similar purposes, thus centralizing the public wealth, and monopolizing the public lands, and all for the benefit of speculators. You have made appropriations already for the benefit of agricultural colleges, institutions which must result to the benefit of but a handful of citizens, of something like ten million acres of the public domain. Speculators and monopolists will seize upon all this. There seems to be, indeed, a determination that the public land shall be ex-



hausted . . . for the benefit of speculators and those who are centralizing your wealth at the expense of labor. But when it is proposed to discriminate in favor of the soldier . . . the argument is raised that you furnish facilities for speculation. <sup>67</sup>

Holman assumed the same attitude when various bills came before the House whose object was to grant public lands to railroad companies. Especially was this true when the Northern Pacific bill came up. This bill would grant to the Northern Pacific Railroad Company "the largest grant of lands ever proposed to be made," and would "absorb a very large proportion of the remainder of the national domain." Holman thought it would defeat the operation of the Homestead Law.<sup>68</sup>

When a similar bill came up, granting lands to the Mississippi and Lake Superior Railroad Company in Minnesota, Holman stated that he did not oppose the granting of public lands when they were to be used for proper public purposes only. The argument had been advanced that the one way in which the people could be induced to go into the western country was through the construction of railroads, but Holman showed that the older sections of the country had been largely populated long before the railroads were built. He feared that a country populated by artificial means by people from various sections, would inevitably be a country in which there would be great differences and extremes in wealth and poverty among the people. He thought it better that the settling of the western country should be a slow and steady process and not hurried by the stimulus of the railroad. He declared that the railroad power was a centralizing power. Using as an example the Illinois Central Railroad Company, he said it was a monopoly

which now holds one quarter of the public lands originally granted to it by the Government. It now proposes to sell those lands at enormously advanced prices, not prices advanced by the influence of the railroad itself, but by the tide of population which has invaded and which would have invaded that State had there been no railroad in the State, robbing the people of homesteads. I would far sooner see the country fill up gradually with a population equal in wealth and condition, than to see it filled up by those artificial agencies, by which inequality of wealth, education, and condition is inevitably created, tending to subvert those republican principles of free government which must ever rest on the comparative and general equality of the people.<sup>69</sup>

The Thirteenth Amendment, forbidding slavery throughout the United States, was introduced in Congress on March 28, 1864. It passed the Senate, but failed to get the necessary two-thirds majority in the House. Holman consistently voted against the measure,<sup>70</sup> believing that, "in view of the present condition of the country, no graver question has ever challenged the attention of the American Congress." He thought that, of all the measures of Lincoln's "disastrous" administration, each in its turn producing "new calamities," the attempt to tamper with the Constitution "threatens the most permanent injury." He condemned the Republican Party for its attitude on the whole slavery question. He pleaded for the preservation of the Constitution as it was and declared that if the Union was ever to be restored, "it must and will be under the Constitution" without any amendment or alteration. It was his honest opinion that all changes in the fundamental law were dangerous.

Since slavery was bound to go, it may seem strange at first that Holman should have opposed ending it by the amending process. He firmly believed that such an amendment was not necessary, as slavery would be dead at the end of the war anyway, and therefore an amendment would be superfluous. He was evidently convinced that the war would seal the fate of slavery.<sup>71</sup>

As to the merits of the proposed amendment, Holman believed that it was an invasion of the domestic policy of the states "so solemnly guaranteed by the Constitution and without which the Union would never have been formed." He firmly advocated the rights of the states which he would maintain "with the same fidelity that I would the rights of Federal Government." In a war for the Constitution and the Union, he "would not have slavery weigh a feather against the progress of our arms." But the policy of the Administration had united the South and divided the public opinion of the North and torn the country into factions. It had sacrificed the youth of the land, and imposed on the country an appalling debt "which will crush labor for ages to come." The administration, he said, "is weighed in the balance and found wanting. It inspires no further hope."<sup>72</sup>

The amendment again came before the House during the second session and was passed by the necessary majority. Holman



was still adamant in his opposition. He denied the charge that the Democratic Party, because it did not favor the amendment, was pro-slavery. Democracy and slavery are natural enemies, he claimed, and the Democratic Party opposed this amendment because it favored the Constitution without change. "Amend this Constitution now, and future amendments will be easily effected; the argument of necessity is never wanting. Begin, and consolidation is inevitable, and then . . . how long will the public liberty survive?"<sup>73</sup> This was a weak argument. Holman would have been on stronger ground, had he based his opposition to the amendment solely on the ground that slavery would die anyway. This was the argument which he had used in the thirty-seventh Congress.

In the meantime, Lincoln had been re-elected, but Holman was not convinced that he was the best man for the office. He had felt that Lincoln's election "would be preferable to that of a man who would under any circumstances recognize the South as an independent Government," but he thought that "the election of any man who would bend his whole energies to the overthrow of the armed force of the rebels & attempt nothing beyond that would be, not only a great piece of good fortune, but the only policy by which the nation can be saved." He was convinced that Lincoln was

frittering away our strength both of men & credit over the merest chimeras, the negro, & as an incident to that the scheme of reorganizing the States. If the war of itself & the destruction of the rebel armies do not abolish slavery, civil measures will not. While we have lost almost everything by the negro policy of the president we have not & will not gain anything by it. Employ the Africans who we embrace by our advances into the South in suitable labor, but make the war simply a war on the rebels in arms & rely upon the courage of our men & the rebellion will go down in ninety days. Lincoln will in all probability be re-elected. . . . But . . . mark my word if Lincoln is re-elected President he will never put down this rebellion & *restore the Government to the basis of Civil Administration*. Grant, McClellan, even Chase would be infinitely safer. Chase would make out a policy which would at least command public confidence, the two former, either of them, could end this war honorably in ninety days. Lincoln never will end it on a permanent basis. I hope & pray to God that I am mistaken.<sup>74</sup>

The last session of the thirty-eighth Congress ended on March

3, 1865, and, with its end, Holman withdrew from Congress for one term. He had not succeeded in becoming a candidate in 1864 for re-election to the thirty-ninth Congress, having been defeated for the nomination. It is curious that this first phase of his congressional career should have begun with the momentous questions which rapidly brought on the Civil War, and that he should leave the national legislative halls when the war was practically over. On April 9, 1865, General Lee surrendered at Appomatox Court House. The Civil War was ended.



## CHAPTER VI

### DURING THE "AGE OF HATE"

WHEN THE thirty-ninth Congress met in December, 1865, some of the sturdiest fighters of the preceding session were missing.<sup>1</sup> This Congress suffered the loss of at least three of the leading War Democrats, Samuel S. Cox and George H. Pendleton of Ohio, and William Steele Holman. The latter was not a candidate for re-election in 1864, having been defeated in the race for the nomination.

The months immediately preceding the convening of this Congress were the so-called "honeymoon" months for Andrew Johnson, who had taken over the duties of President on the death of Abraham Lincoln on April 14, 1865. They were months during which Johnson had a comparatively free hand in administering the affairs of the government, but they were also months during which the Radicals of the North had an opportunity to lay their plans for the complete discomfiture of the old planter class of the South and for their own aggrandizement. It was the forerunner of that "Age of Hate" which was one of the darkest blots in all of American history.

On May 29, 1865, President Johnson announced his policy toward the conquered South. His amnesty proclamation followed closely Lincoln's plan for restoring the Union. He pardoned all ordinary persons for their part in the rebellion after they had taken an oath of allegiance to the United States. The leaders were to be given clemency on personal application to the President. Lincoln had already made it possible for the states, which he considered never to have been out of the Union, but simply out of their proper relation to it, to build new state organizations through a number of loyal citizens equal to ten per cent of the qualified voters of 1860. Their loyalty should be established by an oath of allegiance to the United States.

Lincoln's program, announced on December 8, 1863, had been

bitterly assailed by the Radicals in the thirty-eighth Congress, of which Holman was a member. Lincoln's opponents embodied their first opposition policy in the Wade-Davis bill, which was passed in June, 1864, but which was given a pocket-veto by Lincoln. This reconstruction program of the Radicals held that the states were in fact out of the Union, and therefore were merely territories, to be dealt with not by the President, but by Congress as it saw fit.

During the debates on the whole question of the reconstruction of the Southern states, Holman opposed the position of the Radicals, but in doing so, he let it be known that he did not feel that the policy of the President was strictly constitutional. He declared that Lincoln's proclamation was the "most extraordinary instrument that ever challenged the attention of a free people." He denied that the President, either as a war measure or a peace measure, had the power to change the relation of states to the Union. No power had been given to the Chief Executive to declare who should constitute a state, he said, or who should exercise the elective franchise, or what part or class of the people should assume and exercise political power. To this extent, of course, Holman agreed with the Radicals.<sup>2</sup>

On other grounds, however, Holman was opposed to the position of the Radicals and was especially antagonistic toward Thaddeus Stevens, one of the leaders of that group. The committee on Reconstruction, of which Stevens was a leading member, had introduced the measure known as the Wade-Davis bill which would abolish slavery in the Southern states as a condition for the restoration of their relations to the Union. Holman maintained that African slavery was already dead and said that the nation should not be imperiled further over a "dead issue."<sup>3</sup>

Lincoln did not live to reap the whirlwind of Congressional opposition. Andrew Johnson sent the annual message to Congress in December, 1865. Both the Conservatives and the Radicals regarded Johnson's conciliatory policy with suspicion. The Thirteenth Amendment had already become a part of the Constitution, but the Radicals were not satisfied. A Joint Committee of Fifteen on Reconstruction was set up to determine the future status of the states. Immediately, there was open hostility be-



tween Johnson and Congress which was to continue until Johnson left office on March 4, 1869.

In the Congressional campaign of 1866, Johnson was supported by most of the Democrats and some of the conservative Republicans. Holman, while not agreeing entirely with Johnson's program, was elected to the Fortieth Congress largely on the basis of his opposition to the program of the radical Republicans. The new Congress, however, was to be overwhelmingly Republican, with the Radicals in control. During the short session of the thirty-ninth Congress, the Radicals' first important Reconstruction Act became law on March 2, 1867, over Johnson's veto.

Under ordinary conditions, the first session of the fortieth Congress would not have begun until December, 1867, but the Radicals did not wish to allow President Johnson to dominate the reconstruction program. They had recently passed the Tenure of Office Act which required the President to obtain the consent of the Senate in making removals from office. Another law forbade the President to issue military orders except through the General of the Army, Ulysses S. Grant. Johnson was hostile to both of these acts, and it was expected that he would become liable to impeachment proceedings by violation of them. Therefore, in order for Congress to be on hand for the battle, provision was made before adjournment by that body for the assembling of the new Congress immediately upon the expiration of the old. Holman was a member of the fortieth Congress, 1867-1869.

The hostility between the President and Congress had reached a crisis during the closing weeks of the thirty-ninth Congress. On January 7, 1867, James M. Ashley of Ohio, on his responsibility as a representative and in the presence of the House, charged Andrew Johnson, Vice-President and Acting President of the United States, with the commission of acts which, in contemplation of the Constitution, Ashley considered high crimes and misdemeanors. In Ashley's judgment, Johnson should be impeached. Ashley charged that Johnson had usurped his power and had violated the law; that he had corruptly used the appointing, pardoning and veto powers; and that he had corruptly interfered in elections. It was resolved that the Commit-

tee on the Judiciary be authorized to inquire into the official conduct of Johnson and to report to the House whether, in its opinion, Johnson was guilty of acts which were designed or calculated to overthrow, subvert, or corrupt the government of the United States, or any department or office thereof. The committee was to inquire also whether Johnson was guilty of any act, or had conspired with others to do acts, which were high crimes and misdemeanors, and which required the interposition of the constitutional power of the House. The resolution was agreed to, with one hundred seven affirmative votes, thirty-nine negative, and forty-seven not voting.<sup>4</sup>

The Judiciary Committee, however, to whom the resolution and charges were referred, was unable for want of time to complete the investigation before the expiration of the thirty-ninth Congress. The committee, however, reported on March 2, 1867, that the evidence taken was of such a character as to justify and demand a continuation of the investigation by the fortieth Congress. On March 7, therefore, Ashley introduced a resolution to the effect that the investigation be continued. Holman moved that this resolution be laid on the table, but the motion failed by a vote of thirty-two to one hundred nineteen, with nine not voting. Holman, of course, voted in the affirmative.<sup>5</sup>

For nearly a year, the committee made a searching examination of the political acts of the President, as well as his private and personal affairs, not to find out the truth but to discover evidence that might be used against him. Witnesses were questioned, and the evidence presented to the House contained over a thousand pages, but the committee was unable to find a single crime or misdemeanor upon which proceedings might be instituted against Johnson. Nevertheless, the House voted that sufficient cause did exist, and on February 24, 1868, the House voted to impeach the President because it felt that he had violated the Tenure of Office Act when he removed Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton. Stanton had supported the program of the Radicals against Johnson.

Two days before the vote was taken, Holman's voice was heard in the House during the impeachment proceedings. It was the anniversary of the birthday of George Washington, February 22, and Holman asked that the clerk be allowed to read



Washington's Farewell Address, a speech which, he said,

is full of mature wisdom and patriotic counsel, a speech that comes from the solemn past, yet speaks to every heart that beats for the Union of these States, and the prosperity of the American people; a voice that is answered back from every battle-field of the Revolution, and from the grave of every soldier who has fallen in defense of American liberty. . . . I ask that this immortal address to the American people, a speech that needs no revision; a speech in which there can be no interruptions, may, in this moment of passion, be read to the American Congress. . . .<sup>6</sup>

Objection was made to the reading on the grounds that it was not germane to the subject. One member protested that it would be just as appropriate if the Bible were read. James G. Blaine, the Speaker *pro tempore*, sustained the objections. Holman then withdrew his request saying that he supposed that the reading of the Constitution of the United States would scarcely be in order, but he maintained that certain portions of the Address were clearly in order. He then touched upon the impeachment.

He held that it was proposed, on a doubtful question of construction, not only with reference to the constitutional powers of the national executive, but with reference to the interpretation of a law, that the President of the United States should be impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors. The proposition was to impeach the President upon a mere question of opinion, when, in fact, no crime or misdemeanor had been committed. Holman argued that the President had assigned a military officer, Brevet Major General Lorenzo Thomas, to a given duty, to the same duty to which he recently assigned the General of the Army, and that officer had sought to enter upon the discharge of that duty, but had failed to do so, and the incumbent remained in his office. He denied that an offense had been in fact committed, no matter what interpretation might be placed on the tenure law; for if Stanton was Secretary of War, he was still Secretary, he was still in fact in possession of his office, for the Senate had declined to confirm a successor.

Holman contended that the attitude of the House was a clear case where

party spirit, with its rancor and passion, is the master. It is the reckless passion of party spirit which is seeking here, through Congress,

to usurp the powers which belong to the national Executive, as it has already sought to seize upon those powers which belong to the Judicial Department of the Government as established by the Federal Constitution. Every step in this proceeding has been marked by the reckless haste and aggressiveness of party spirit.<sup>7</sup>

Reference was then made at length to several sections of Washington's Farewell Address, in which the first President counseled against the evil effects of party and the dangers of its supremacy. Holman further analyzed the relations of the President to the executive powers of the government, and his relations to the members of his Cabinet. He declared that the Constitution renders the President directly responsible for the manner in which the executive power of the government is exercised. A President must have as members of his Cabinet, he said, persons who are in harmony with him, so that unity and efficiency may be secured in the administration of the affairs of the government. The public good demands it, he argued, declaring that "hitherto party spirit has never been so intense or vindictive as to seek partisan advantages at the expense of the interests of the country."

Expressions made on the floor of the House indicated clearly, Holman said, that it was the intention of the majority party, "in a moment of passion, blinded by partisan resentment," to push forward the impeachment, "and the judges who are to pronounce solemn judgment on this impeachment now have already uttered sentiments which showed that judgment is already pronounced!" Andrew Johnson was to be impeached of high crimes and misdemeanors, he said,

because he stands in the way of the partisan purposes of this Congress. He is an obstacle to the absolutism of Congress. He stands in the way of the vaulting ambition of aspiring statesmen. And the pretense of a mistake in the interpretation of a law of doubtful import must subserve the purpose of impeachment in the absence of a substantial reason. . . . If their designs of ambition shall be consummated and the executive and judicial departments of the Government are made subservient to the absolutism of Congress, the . . . fate of this Republic is in the hands of its people. In their patriotism and devotion to constitutional liberty there is enduring hope.<sup>8</sup>

In these remarks, Holman expressed the sentiments of the



minority. On February 24, 1868, Thaddeus Stevens submitted the impeachment resolutions against Johnson. Stevens and John A. Bingham, of Ohio, were the committee of two appointed to go to the Senate and, at the bar thereof, in the name of the House of Representatives and of all the people of the United States, to impeach the President, and demand that the Senate order the appearance of Johnson to answer to the impeachment charges. George S. Boutwell of Massachusetts, Stevens, Bingham, James F. Wilson of Iowa, John A. Logan of Illinois, George W. Julian of Indiana and Hamilton Ward of New York, composed the committee of seven appointed to prepare and report the articles of impeachment. Naturally, on all resolutions and articles of impeachment, Holman voted in the negative.<sup>9</sup>

The President's trial was set for March 13. The Radicals of the Senate were, of course, determined to convict Johnson, but when the vote was taken, it stood thirty-five to nineteen, one vote short of the necessary two-thirds required. Johnson therefore continued as President until March 4, 1869.<sup>10</sup>

Holman's insistence on economy in the expenses of the federal government was again displayed during the second session of the fortieth Congress. The House was considering the legislative appropriation bill for the year ending June 30, 1869. One item in particular met Holman's opposition. It called for an appropriation of \$12,000 for the "experimental gardens" in Washington. These Holman felt were useless. A similar stand was taken against the appropriation for a library, laboratory and museum for the Department of Agriculture. Such projects, he believed, would not promote the agricultural interests of the country. "While the country is demanding economy and retrenchment," he argued, "why should we unnecessarily vote money for fancy articles?" The people, he said, would pay their taxes far more willingly if they knew that every dollar of the revenues of the government was honestly and properly expended. He insisted that for purposes of "mere embellishment and decoration," Congress had no right to lay burdens on the people, "even to the extent of a hair's weight." Labor should not be oppressed in order to gratify the fancy or the taste of public officials, he maintained.<sup>11</sup>

Throughout his long career in Congress, Holman was vitally

and unselfishly interested in supporting the general idea of homesteads for actual settlers, and in opposing the granting of public lands to railroad corporations. He thought that the two ideas, homesteads for settlers and land grants from the public domain to the railroads, were contradictory. The land grant policy of the government had begun as early as 1850 when Stephen A. Douglas induced Congress to pass the Illinois Central Railroad land grant bill. From then until 1871, Congress granted almost 200,000,000 acres to aid in the construction of railroads. At first these grants were made to the states, but after 1862 they were made directly to the railroad companies. These grants included not only the right-of-way, but also alternate sections within a certain distance of the road. A time limit was contained in almost every grant, whereby if the railroad did not complete its line within a certain number of years, the lands were to be forfeited to the government. A large number of the companies failed to construct their roads within the time limit, and Congress was urgently requested to extend the time or to renew the grants which had expired. In this manner, large areas of the public domain were withdrawn from actual settlement by the homesteader, and it was this policy of the government which incurred the censure of Holman.

Especially was this true in regard to the grants to the southern railroad companies. Several of these companies had failed to construct their roads within the specified time limits, and a bill was introduced into the House to subject such lands to the provisions of the homestead law. Holman was in favor of the object of this bill, although it was held by his opponents that support of the measure necessarily implied hostility to the interests of the southern states. This was an unwarranted assumption. Holman had never voted to grant a single acre of the public lands to a corporation or to reinvest such corporation with the title to lands after a forfeiture. In his judgment the whole policy of the government in this respect had been a fatal error. As to forfeiture of the land of the southern railroads, he denied that the bill was a measure of vengeance toward the South. He insisted that it was a measure in the interests of the whole people.

These grants of lands had been made in 1856 to certain railroad companies of the South by several acts of Congress. These



lands had been forfeited in 1866 when some of the railroads had not been commenced and none had been completed. Therefore this bill proposed to throw these lands open to the provisions of the homestead law and give them to actual settlers—"to the landless and the homeless, who will occupy and improve the lands and add to the wealth of this country by their labor instead of to these wealthy corporations." Holman thought there could be no objection founded on public policy to such a bill:

In a country like ours is it not wiser to bestow lands on the landless, to the men who will make them produce their harvests by their own labor, rather than on rich corporations for the purposes of speculation? Is it not better to have many citizens masters of their own homesteads, the owners of the land they cultivate, than to centralize this wealth of the soil in the hands of a handful of men who are already rich, and create in the progress of time a nation of tenants? The most precious wealth of a republic is an independent and prosperous people. Will we promote this by centralizing the wealth of the soil and creating a nation of landlords with over-grown estates and hopeless tenants? . . . Every grant this nation is making of these millions of acres to favored corporations tends to that result.<sup>12</sup>

Such a bill, Holman maintained, was not one of hostility to the South, because whether the lands were in the West or South, the grants were made, in fact, to the great capitalists of New York, London, and Paris. They received the benefits, not the people. He challenged the statement that these land grants encouraged the construction of railroads and developed the resources of the country, and declared that under such a system of land monopoly, the laboring man, with his family, in vain would emigrate to the South and West in an effort to improve his fortunes. "In a very short period," he said, the emigrant would "find every inviting spot already seized upon by these wealthy favorites of Congress, and will remain . . . homeless and landless, and his children become in time the hopeless tenants of lands which should have been their own." The House finally passed the bill by a vote of eighty-three to seventy-five,<sup>13</sup> but no action was taken by the Senate whose Committee on Public Lands had reported adversely.<sup>14</sup>

In the next session of Congress Holman submitted a resolution

which summarized his whole attitude toward this question. It was resolved:

That in the present condition of the national finances no further subsidies ought to be granted by Congress, either in bonds or money, to railroad or other corporations or to promote local enterprises, but the whole resources of the country ought to be applied to the pressing necessities of the public service in such manner as will relieve the people from the burdens of taxation.

That grants of the public lands to corporations ought to be discontinued, and the whole of such lands ought to be held as a sacred trust, to secure homesteads to actual settlers, and for no other purpose whatever.<sup>15</sup>

The House accepted the first resolution, but the second was laid on the table.

Two other great subjects of the period, the tariff and the public debt, also interested Holman. James G. Blaine, of Maine, speaking for the Republicans, argued that the public debt should be paid in coin, and urged that the prosperity of the country demanded an increase of the tariff. These two issues, of course, were closely allied. Holman, when he differed from the policy of the Republicans, represented the views of the majority of his constituents.

On the first of March, 1868, the national debt stood at \$2,519,829,622.84. The interest for the current year was \$129,678,078.50, and of that amount \$119,961,958.50 was payable in gold. The appropriations for the current expenses of the government for 1868, as estimated by the Secretary of the Treasury, in addition to the interest on the debt, was \$182,183,736.92, making the entire expenditure, according to estimates, \$311,861,804.92. The appropriations for the last year of Buchanan's administration were \$66,703,592.46. The greenbacks in circulation in 1868 amounted to \$356,157,747. Like many other westerners, Holman believed in the "Ohio idea." This held that the government should pay the principal and interest of bonds in greenbacks, wherever the law did not specifically provide for hard money. This was all that the bondholder could ask, Holman said, and "when he asks more, he asks that, for his own benefit, injustice shall be done to the people on whose industry rests the value of his securities."



Blaine, who was the leading champion of those bond-holders who were demanding that the entire debt of the government be paid in coin, instead of in greenbacks, predicted universal ruin should the "Ohio idea" be adopted. Holman, on the other hand, insisted that the basis on which the debt was contracted should be the basis on which it should be paid. He declared that the legal-tender notes were money and were "legal representatives of value in the proper sense of the word." He charged that the Republican Party had always favored a policy "which would promote the interest of capital, making the rich richer and the poor poorer." Republicans, he said, had established the greenbacks as money and had created an enormous debt on the basis of that money. With greenbacks, he insisted, pensions had been paid to the widows and orphans of the soldiers; but the bond-holders were demanding more valuable money. "The overgrown power" of the Republican Party, he said, "conscious of its strength and deluding to its purposes even the honest patriotism of the people, bends its energies to the interest of capital alone."

Holman also denounced the national banking system which, he said, was created during the War as an agency of the capitalists. These men were profiting from the fact that the notes issued by these banks were exempt from state and national taxation. He pleaded for just and equal taxation of all forms of wealth. In conclusion, he announced that he defended as a sound financial policy for the government: (1) the payment of the public debt on the basis on which it was contracted, in the lawful money of the country, except where by express stipulation agreement had been made to pay in coin: (2) the taxation of the bonds by the federal government to an amount substantially equal to the tax imposed on other property for state and local purposes in the several states; (3) the abolition of the national banks and the substitution of United States notes for national bank paper; (4) reform in national expenditure and no taxation of the people to give lands or moneys to railroad corporations; (5) a tariff for revenue and not to protect the manufacturers at the expense of the producing interests; and, more than all, (6) the speedy restoration of the Union.<sup>16</sup>

On February 24, 1869, when a bill was being considered by

the House "to strengthen the public credit" by paying the bond-holders in gold, Holman sarcastically referred to its title. It was not an act, he said, to strengthen the public credit, "but to strengthen the manacles that bind and prostrate the laboring masses." This act applied to the five-twenty bonds, for the bonds issued after the legal-tender act was passed expressly specified the kind of money in which those of each issue were to be paid. Holman maintained that while it was true that the acts authorizing the five-twenty bonds did not expressly say in what currency they were to be paid, "there is not an important judge in the civilized world who would not decide upon the face of the law that these five-twenty bonds are in fact, by the terms of the law, payable in greenbacks, lawful money of the United States." He further declared that "nothing but the arrogant effrontery of overgrown wealth could have suggested that the principal of these five-twenty bonds was payable in coin and not payable in the lawful money with which they were purchased." He also stated:

The public credit can only be strengthened by a severe and honest economy in the public expenditures, by confirming in the public mind the belief that the millions wrung from labor will be honestly applied to public purposes and not squandered in the base partisan schemes and monstrous frauds which have for years exhausted the Treasury, by satisfying the people that the public demands upon their industry shall be no greater than good faith and even-handed justice to the public creditors imperatively require, and that labor shall be protected against the unjust and voracious demands of capital.<sup>17</sup>

A year later a bill was drawn up to provide increased banking facilities for the nation. It proposed to increase the national bank currency by the addition of \$95,000,000, reducing to the same extent the currency issued by the government. It also proposed that the government issue bonds bearing four and one-half per cent interest, payable, principal and interest, in coin, and exempted from all taxation, state and national, and running for twenty-five years. On the basis of these bonds, national bank currency to the extent of ninety per cent of the bonds deposited could be issued. The measure contemplated the early withdrawal of the greenbacks, and the substitution of national bank notes.

Holman opposed this bill. "It would seem that this Govern-



ment had no other mission than to legislate for the promotion of the interest of wealth, to record the edicts of capital," he declared. With the nation in debt, with the revenues insufficient to sustain the government, and with the country laboring under oppressive taxation, it seemed to him unreasonable that these benefits should be secured to a few thousand citizens who had concentrated their wealth, "and now aspire to the absolute control of the whole money interest of the country." It was their policy, he said, "to control, if they do not already control, our legislation, acting with the force and energy of one giant corporation."<sup>18</sup>

From the condition of the financial system, and from the fact that the greater part of the national debt had been made on the basis of the greenback currency, Holman felt that paper money ought to be preferred as a matter of common honesty by the people. This opinion was expressed in no uncertain terms during the debates in the forty-third Congress on the resumption of specie payments. There had been for several years past a persistent determination of the national banks to drive out legal-tender paper money. The capitalistic interests seemed to be desirous of nothing less than an absolute monopoly of issuing money.<sup>19</sup> Holman believed that all interests would be better promoted by a money coined out of gold and silver, than by any other standard of value. However, he admitted that in the present circumstances, to compel by legislation the resumption of specie payments would be impossible and would be attended with universal disaster. He considered greenbacks to be fiat money.<sup>20</sup>

Later, in the forty-fourth Congress, when the Democratic House was considering a bill for the repeal of the resumption-day clause in the Resumption Act of 1875, Holman again voiced his opposition to any plan which would retire greenbacks. It was his belief that the early resumption of specie payments was absolutely impossible. He said that the debt had been greatly enlarged and declared that many government bonds were held in foreign nations. In relating his own views regarding resumption, he said:

The highway . . . to specie resumption is to reduce the burdens which

rest upon the people of this country; especially the burdens of Federal taxation. . . . Economy in the Government, local as well as Federal, is the first and most important step toward the resumption of specie payments.<sup>21</sup>

Holman did not hesitate to express his opinion that "the double-standard gold and silver legal tender" was demanded by the true interests of the country, and that

if the fatal policy of the resumption act of January 14, 1875, is finally carried out and the exclusively gold standard of 1873 shall be maintained, the general prostration of all the industries of this country will be inevitable, and widespread disaster and universal suffering will fall upon our people. No interest will escape the general ruin except that of invested capital, which will be enlarged to the degree that all other interests of the country will suffer. . . . Every measure of finance and taxation since the close of the war has been against labor and in favor of capital . . . taking from "the mouth of labor the bread it has earned," and . . . only through a reversal of this policy and the enactment of laws of finance and taxation equally just to every interest can our prosperity be restored.<sup>22</sup>

In the election of 1868, Holman again was a candidate for a seat in Congress. Due to the redistricting of the state by the General Assembly in 1867-1868, he now represented the third district.<sup>23</sup> He had received the nomination by acclamation. No one opposed him. His course as a politician had been acceptable to the people, and they were satisfied that they had no better man to offer. Holman had made a flying visit to his family and friends at Aurora before the election. There "he received the most flattering reception of his life, which was given spontaneously by his enthusiastic and numerous friends." Many assured him of his re-election.<sup>24</sup>

The forty-first Congress would not ordinarily convene until December, 1869, but the Republicans were faced with the necessity of revising the financial program of the government in order to make provisions for paying the enormous debt of the country. Therefore a special session of Congress was called in March, 1869, by President Grant, and the chief subject discussed was the tariff. Holman was back in his seat "to challenge the expenditure of every unnecessary cent," as well as to fight the tariff policy of the administration.<sup>25</sup>



Although he would, under normal conditions, advocate free trade, yet Holman felt that with the great national debt taxing the energy of the nation to its utmost capacity, free trade in the very nature of things was impossible. Where taxation must necessarily be oppressive, there were strong arguments in favor of raising large portions of the revenue of the country by the imposition of duties upon foreign importations as against internal taxation. He believed that the raising of revenue by duties on imports was more economical and less exposed to fraud, and less harassing to the citizen, than was the direct tax. But whenever the tariff on imported goods worked to the benefit of capital and to the oppression of the common man, Holman would oppose it. In this respect he considered the tariff "the most inequitable of all modes of taxation."

A tariff on the necessities of life, falling equally on the rich and the poor, was unjust, according to Holman. Under the proposed tariff measure of 1870, tea, coffee, sugar, salt and other necessities were to be heavily taxed, not for purposes of protection, but for revenue. The farmer and laborer, therefore, would be called upon to bear much of the burden of this tax. Holman opposed this. He claimed that the general tariff policy of the nation had been fatal to the commerce of the United States. As a member of the Committee on Decline of American Commerce, he had made a thorough investigation of the subject. The report of the committee recommended the remission of duties and the payment of bounties for shipbuilding as the proper method by which the shipping interests could be revived.

While Holman agreed with the majority report, he thought that the payment of bounties was a departure from the traditional policy of the government, and was not required for the revival of American commerce. The committee found that the decline of commerce was not due to the Civil War, but to the system of protection which was in operation, and, as a result, "foreign ships, sailing under foreign flags, carry our mails, our passengers, and our freights." Such a situation, Holman said, could be relieved, not by granting subsidies to the shipbuilder, but by removing the heavy duties which had been imposed on the materials necessary for the construction of the ships. In this way,

American commerce would be revived, and additional revenue would flow into the American treasury.<sup>26</sup>

At the same time there was criticism throughout the country regarding the franking privilege which was enjoyed by Congressmen. Petitions, denouncing the franking privilege and exposing the frauds resulting from it, were circulated and sent to Congress. These petitions declared that these abuses and frauds had assumed such enormous proportions that the total abolition of the privilege had become a necessity. Postmasters in the United States had been furnished with blank petitions by the Post Office Department. These asked for the repeal of the privilege.<sup>27</sup> On January 27, 1870, a bill to abolish the franking privilege was introduced in the House. Holman favored the bill and it passed the House.<sup>28</sup> One editorial commented:

Judge Holman signed it [the petition] at first sight, declaring the Franking privilege a most iniquitous imposition upon the dear people—And who should know better than the dear Judge? Have we not seen documents by the drayload, traveling over the country, under his frank? But of course this was his privilege, and others did so, and we can't blame him.<sup>29</sup>

The perennial railroad question again came up for discussion in 1870 when a bill was introduced to grant lands to aid in the construction of a railroad and telegraph line from Portland to Astoria and McMinnville, Oregon. It provided that the land be sold only to actual settlers, in quantities not exceeding one hundred sixty acres to each person, and the price not to exceed \$2.50 per acre. The entire length of the road was only one hundred and thirty miles. Holman had the clerk of the House read one of the petitions which were being signed all over the United States. These petitioners, feeling the urgent necessity for the enactment of a law to prevent the further absorption of the public lands of the United States by railroads and other corporations, and begging to have the residue of the public domain forever set apart for the exclusive use of actual settlers, in limited quantities, requested Congress to take prompt action in the passage of such a law to safeguard the public lands.

Congress was asked to approve this request on the ground that "tens of thousands of the industrial classes of large cities and



towns, now unemployed, must seek an outlet and escape from the poverty and distress which surround them or be rapidly driven to pauperism and crime." The petitioners demanded such a law as simple justice to their children and to immigrants fleeing from European land monopoly. Such an act would be a measure of justice to the whole American people, "as a rich legacy in trust by our generation for those to come after us—never to be alienated." Finally, they urged their appeal, as one "deeply affecting the morals and well-being of our people, in that these giant corporations have become the allies of stock gamblers in turning our public domain, the heritage of all, into one vast national gambling arena."

Holman supported these petitions and denounced the provision in the bill, setting \$2.50 per acre as the price to be paid "for lands which ought to be free to the actual tiller as the gift of God to mankind." He said that the railroads would be built fast enough, and should be built by the capitalists themselves who would profit by their being constructed. He called attention to the fact that over ninety such bills to aid construction had been introduced into Congress in the past two years. He hoped that every one would fail. "But if they should pass, one hundred million acres of the public domain will be appropriated by them."<sup>30</sup>

The same bill was before the House again on April 29, 1870, but Holman declared that the question was not open for debate, as the House had previously adopted his resolution, on March 21, to the effect that the policy of granting subsidies in public lands to railroad and other corporations ought to be discontinued, and that the public lands of the United States should be held for the exclusive purpose of securing homesteads to actual settlers under the homestead and pre-emption laws. Holman insisted that the House could not reverse its record. Nor did he stop there. Again he attacked the whole system of land monopoly. He protested against this monopoly "in the name of every laboring man in America," and "because it is at war with every just idea of republican government." He denounced it in the name of humanity "which it out-rages by an unjust discrimination." He concluded:

If the policy which was so nobly impressed on the early history of our country, and expressed in the words of that grand old Republican of the last age, Andrew Jackson, that it is not in a splendid Government, supported by powerful monopolies and aristocratic establishments that our people will find happiness or their liberties protection, but in a plain system, void of pomp, protecting all and granting favors to none, could inspire the deliberations of this House as it did the hearts of our fathers, these attempts to amass fortunes by inflicting wretchedness upon a whole people would meet with a prompt and signal rebuke.<sup>31</sup>

Holman again expressed himself at great length before the House on January 27, 1871, when an attempt was made to pass a joint resolution extending the time to construct a railroad from the St. Croix River to the west end of Lake Superior and to Bayfield, Wisconsin. This bill in effect would grant 1,418,451 acres of land to the St. Croix and Lake Superior Railroad Company. It could not be pretended that this particular grant was required for the purpose of opening up to settlement the region of country through which the railroad was to run, for this strip of land ran through an area already settled. A similar grant had been made in 1864, but it expired five years later with no part of the railroad constructed.

It was charged that the incidental benefit accruing to the country through which the road was to pass was a mere incident. Speculation was the real object. Holman denied that there was any public necessity for this grant. He said that west of the proposed road, and parallel with it, and only thirty miles from it, another railroad, running from St. Paul, on the Mississippi River, to Duluth, at the western extremity of Lake Superior, had actually been constructed by a magnificent grant of public lands made to the state of Minnesota.

Holman then produced a printed slip published by *The Minnesotian*, a leading Republican paper of Duluth, a city located seven or eight miles from one of the termini of the proposed road, claiming that the people of the whole area through which the road was to run, were against the grant and were demanding that the lands should be thrown open to the enterprise and industry of the people of the country. He called upon the Republican members of Congress to keep good faith with their constituents by refusing to grant any additional lands to railroads.



He declared that the Democratic Party had always been hostile to these grants of land and, in the election of 1872, the party would place itself in positive hostility "to the agencies which are now ceaselessly centralizing in the few the resources and wealth of this country, agencies more powerful and more fatal than ever before destroyed the just and equal rights of a people."<sup>32</sup>

This same bill was again before the House during the forty-second Congress. Holman called attention to the fact that the previous Congress had adopted unanimously his motion to the effect that the policy of granting subsidies in public lands to railroad and other corporations ought to be discontinued, and that the public lands should be subject only to the homestead and pre-emption laws. He said that this resolution had been referred to as the policy of the Republican Party, and that Congress should not now go back on its record. His main argument against the policy of granting lands to the railroads was that Congress was

taking from the landless people of this nation, the laboring men of this nation, their rightful heritage, to build up excessive fortunes for a few favorites, and you invest them with vast corporate powers, and the power thus corruptly given assails public virtue wherever it is found, and remorseless in its selfishness and cupidity, seeks to aggrandize to itself rights, even of Government, which ought to belong to the whole people. . . . It requires no prophet to tell that your policy must be challenged and these corporations shorn of their power, or the free institutions of this Republic will perish.<sup>33</sup>

Holman opposed all these grants, whether of lands or money, not only as in contravention of the rights of the whole people, but as tending most certainly to the demoralization and corruption of public affairs in every branch of the state and national governments. These grants, he said, were encouraging the crowds of lobbyists "who are now around the Capitol seeking wealth at the expense of the industry of others," and declared:

It is this tendency to corruption and public frauds that is more to be deplored than the mere grant of these lands. While this system continues you cannot have purity and honesty in the conduct of public affairs. Can you expect honesty in public affairs, purity in the management of the public interests, when by this kind of legislation you hold out hopes

to lobbyists and adventurers of amassing enormous fortunes by the yielding compliancy of legislative bodies?<sup>34</sup>

A substitute measure was finally presented and accepted on March 15, 1872 by a vote of ninety-five to eighty-five, with sixty not voting. Holman voted in the affirmative. The substitute bill declared in effect that the lands granted to the St. Croix Railroad Company were forfeited to the United States, and were to be reserved for homestead entry and settlement.<sup>35</sup>

Holman received congratulations from many quarters for his action on these measures. From the office of the Land Reform Association of New Jersey came copies of resolutions unanimously adopted at the regular meeting of the Reform Club of Hudson County, New Jersey, at Jersey City, March 18, 1872.<sup>36</sup> The president of the Land Reform League of Kansas sent the thanks of his organization.<sup>37</sup> The Land Reform Association of New York expressed similar approval.<sup>38</sup>

The Goat Island controversy was of a somewhat different nature. This island, also called Yerba Buena, lay in San Francisco Bay. Its total value was placed at \$5,000,000. It contained one hundred and forty-four acres. The Central Pacific Railroad Company desired to secure half of the island for terminal facilities. The understanding was that the United States government should reserve the free use of all of it for military purposes during wartime and when deemed necessary by the President of the United States.<sup>39</sup> Holman fought the cession of this land to the railroad. He thought if this valuable property should be given to this corporation, it should be upon some good and sufficient grounds of public advantage. He submitted that no such reason had been presented for granting this free gift of \$2,500,000 to a private corporation. He produced a report from government engineers, showing the great value of the island, and concluded that it should be entirely appropriated to the exclusive uses of the government. He declared that it was vain to say that this property was to be used for purposes of commerce: "That same argument might be used in favor of every grant of public property. You might exhaust the resources of this country upon arguments even more plausible than that. If the island were valuable to the corporation, and if the government could safely dis-



pose of it, then the corporation should pay its value, as other citizens do, when they desire to obtain property for their own use.

Holman maintained that the great objection to this measure was in the constant enlargement of the power and wealth of these corporations which were threatening, for the purpose of their own aggrandizement, the legislation of the country. If such a policy continued, the representative principle of the government would be in danger. The policy of the government should be "to protect all and grant favors to none."<sup>40</sup>

However, not every bill granting lands to railroads met with Holman's objections. If he could be convinced that such a grant were absolutely necessary, and that it did not cause an injury to the people, he did not protest. This was true in the case of the Memphis and Vicksburg Railroad Company. On January 6, 1875, the Committee on Military Affairs brought in a bill granting to this railroad the right-of-way along the river bank at the national cemetery at Vicksburg, Mississippi. When Holman was shown that the construction of the road at this point was absolutely essential, he made no further objection, and the bill passed.<sup>41</sup>

Holman, although a firm believer in the Homestead Law of 1862, was one of the leaders in the general movement for land reform. By 1871, Congress had granted 128,000,000 acres of the public lands to railroads to aid in their construction. This policy, as has been seen, worked against the general interests of the settlers in several ways. This land was not available for free entry by settlers. In addition to the land granted to the railroads, millions of acres had been granted to the different states for the use of agricultural and mechanical colleges. As a result, corruption and fraud had been perpetrated. Would-be settlers found that the amount of available land was greatly reduced.<sup>42</sup>

Later, during the Forty-fourth Congress, the House considered a bill allowing the disposal of public lands in certain southern states by other means than through the homestead laws. The bill would leave the public lands in those states subject to sale and private entry in unlimited quantities at the minimum price of \$1.25 per acre. Only lands which were "fit for agricultural purposes" were to be reserved under the provisions of the home-

stead laws. This, of course, was intended to apply to lands fit only for timber, grazing, and other purposes. Holman feared that such a measure would react to the benefit of capitalists who would "monopolize large portions of the public domain at a price greatly disproportionate to its value." He felt that if the wealth of these lands, even though not adapted to agriculture, were to be distributed among the landless people, "a very beneficial result would follow in at least some diffusion of wealth." He feared also that it would be extremely difficult to discriminate between lands adapted to agriculture and those that were not, and this difficulty would be a source of great frauds in the country.<sup>43</sup>

In 1871, Holman reversed his former stand of requiring actual occupancy for ownership of the land. A joint resolution had been passed by the General Assembly of Indiana, appealing to Congress to enact a law allowing soldiers and sailors (or their widows and orphans), who had served at least ninety days in the Union army or navy of the United States, and who had been honorably discharged, to select one hundred sixty acres of the public lands subject to sale, including alternate reserved sections along the lines of railroads, without requiring occupancy at the time. After this resolution was read in the House, Holman spoke in its favor. He said that the resolution expressed the general sentiment of the people of Indiana, without regard to any differences of party. The people preferred that the men who defended the integrity of the Union should have the public lands rather than the land monopolists.

Holman said there were two things to be considered in a system of land bounties. One was to secure to every soldier and seaman, and their wives and minor children, whether able to enter on the public lands or not, the benefits of the general bounty of the government. This bounty should be open to all. The second was to prevent speculators and stock jobbers from becoming the real recipients of this bounty by becoming purchasers of land warrants that may be issued and entering the public lands in vast bodies. Holman favored the proposal to allow disabled persons to take up their claims through agents. He thought it would be most unjust to cut off from this bounty "that great body of our soldiers who, while in the Union Army, or since the close of



the war, have become disabled from availing themselves of the benefits of the bounty." Such a measure, Holman reasoned, would put an end to the plundering schemes so persistently urged

by monopolists who are ever grasping at your public domain. It forever withdraws a vast body of the public lands from the operation of those corrupt and corrupting schemes which seeks to give the public lands to wealthy corporations. Putting an end to this pernicious policy, we shall at the same time extend to those most entitled to the public lands this grateful acknowledgment of their services to the Government.<sup>44</sup>

It was in this Congress that an attempt was made to repeal the income tax which had originally been levied as a war measure during the special session on August 5, 1861. It had also been included in the internal revenue act of 1862. Holman had voted for the measure at that time, holding that the income tax was the most just and equitable tax paid. It was his belief that wealth should bear its equitable proportion of the burden of upholding the agencies of the government. He thought that "to throw this burden upon labor, practically for the relief of capitalized wealth, is clearly and manifestly unjust." Holman reasoned that by repealing the income tax, \$13,000,000 would be subtracted from the national income, and because such a reduction in income could not be borne by the government, labor would have to assume the burden. To say that corporations should be exempt from paying their reasonable share for the support of the government, and by this exemption increasing the burdens upon labor, was, in Holman's judgment, "as unjust a proposition as was ever made in a legislative body." As a result of the attitude of Holman and others, the income tax was not repealed at that time; the matter was to come up again in the next Congress.<sup>45</sup>

In the election of 1870, Holman was again returned to Congress, which was called in special session by President Grant. This action of the President was due largely to the difficulties which were occurring in disturbed parts of the South. Over two hundred cases of riots and other disturbances occurred between 1869 and 1871. Federal troops were sent from place to place in the South to aid in the enforcement of the laws. The Fourteenth Amendment had been proclaimed as a part of the Constitution in July, 1868, but attempts were being made in many places

to prevent its enforcement. Finally in the special session of the forty-second Congress, Grant asked for additional legislation for its enforcement.

The Republicans charged that the policy of the Democratic Party had brought on the general lawlessness and that Democrats were attempting to block all corrective legislation. But Holman denied that such was the case. The members of the Democratic Party did not oppose additional enforcement legislation because they were indifferent to or willing to countenance or palliate lawlessness in the South. Holman added:

We denounce and condemn crime and insubordination to law in the South as, if possible, more fatal to the prosperity of the country than if it occurred elsewhere, for it furnishes in the hands of unscrupulous partisans means to keep alive bitter animosities between the two sections of the Union, while every true man in the country utters the words once uttered by the President, "Let us have peace!"<sup>46</sup>

Holman agreed that there had been serious disorders in several of the states, but it was clear to him that the organized violence was not directed against or influenced by hostility to the national government. He thought that the difficulty was the result of bad and corrupt local and state governments. The enormous debts of those states, accumulated in the period following the war, told the story of official corruption, he said. He observed that in those states of the South where the body of the people, uncontrolled by military power, had been permitted to organize and control their own governments, peace and prosperity generally prevailed. However, he did not specifically name the states in this category.

In analyzing the Fourteenth Amendment, Holman found that it contained several features which were new to the American government. Some related to matters that were formerly under the sole jurisdiction of the states. He deplored this transfer of power to the federal government, and declared that if the Fourteenth Amendment gave Congress the power to interfere at all in the local affairs of the states, "then there is no limitation on the powers of Congress in respect to the domestic affairs of States; from being a Government of the limited powers dele-



gated by the Constitution, its powers become absolute and without limit."<sup>47</sup>

Holman did not believe that the people intended anything like this in the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment. Neither did he believe that the condition of public affairs required or justified the startling increase of power proposed to be conferred on the President. Such a step would be dangerous, he said. He was not called upon to question the patriotism of the Chief Magistrate, for he would not confer such power on any President except when, in the midst of actual war, it was clearly demanded for the public safety. He did not believe such power would be granted by Congress, but

if this bill shall be enacted into a law, breaking down the ancient barriers between Federal and State authority, making the powers of Congress absolute in the local affairs of States, arming the President of the United States with power to employ the Army and Navy in affairs of State governments—to suspend the ancient writ of personal liberty and proclaim martial law at his own discretion, we will with confidence appeal from Congress to the people; and I trust in God they will wipe out your usurping legislation with the spirit of your fathers when they struck the alien and sedition laws from the statute book.<sup>48</sup>

Between the first and second sessions of the forty-second Congress, Holman was invited to deliver an address before the alumni of Franklin College, Indiana, his *alma mater*, on June 20, 1871. It was just thirty years after he had left Franklin for the active duties of life. He said that he was "unpleasantly conscious" of how poorly qualified he was to speak to a body of scholars on a literary subject. Therefore, he turned to a discussion of labor and capital.<sup>49</sup>

He briefly discussed the philosophy on which Franklin College was founded as a Manual Labor Institute, "in which young men should blend, and with actual manual labor in the field and the workshop, the pursuit of learning, which ennobles labor and gives the dignity of philosophic inquiry to every ordinary pursuit which furnishes shelter, food and clothing for mankind." The idea of a manual labor college was closely allied with, and indeed inspired by, the fact that "the noblest temporal purpose of education is to elevate labor and to vindicate its rights." The founders hoped, he said, that "all who left its benignant associa-

tions would most certainly become champions of every cause which would ameliorate the condition and assert the rights of men who increased the comforts of human life by the labor of their hands."

Holman used these references to the founding of Franklin College as a basis for his address. He reviewed briefly the contributions which labor had made to the history of the world and showed that the "true test of the greatness of a nation is the condition of its laboring people." If the masses are cheerful and prosperous, virtuous and intelligent, he said, the government is wise and the nation is great, because "a virtuous, intelligent, and happy people is the wealth of a nation."

The artificial wealth of a country, represented by corporations, rests for its value on labor in every field of industry, the speaker asserted. This labor is the only source of wealth. But capital has sought to affect public affairs, either in enlargement of opportunity for aggrandizement, or evading the just burdens which wealth should bear in support of the government. He questioned "the soundness of a system of political economy which enlarges facilities for unbounded opulence." This excessive opulence, he maintained, has produced "the licentiousness and luxury which have overwhelmed virtue and corrupted the very fountains of public justice." He was convinced of the danger of great wealth:

Excessive wealth leads to overgrown landed estates. In the future it will come to be a question in the States of this Union how far it is compatible with free government to restrain the unbounded accumulation of landed property. It may be found sufficient to restrain government from giving its aid to policies favoring excessive accumulations and perpetuities of estates. But nothing is more certain than that unbounded opulence and estates on the one hand is ever attended by indigence and misery on the other.

In conclusion, he said:

The just principles which underly social and political society . . . the masses will not surrender. The educated intelligence of this Republic, growing daily more conscious of its obligation and duty to the whole people, will take care that the great forces which time is disclosing . . . shall not become agents of injustice and oppression, but of universal good.

And with the closer connections of the world and the evergrowing



force of a great example, may we not indulge the hope, that there will be a steadfast growth in the public opinion of the nations; that government, the offspring of the social nature and brotherhood of man, and ordained of Heaven for his happiness, shall only be employed in diffusing equally over all the blessings of enlightenment, security, prosperity, and peace.<sup>50</sup>

As usual, when the next session of Congress met in December, 1871, Holman was found opposing various items which appeared in the appropriation bills. For the next four years, James A. Garfield was chairman of the Appropriations Committee of the House, and he had to face much criticism from the minority party. His greatest adversary was "Objector Holman," whom he now encountered for the first time. Holman was being called "The Watch-dog of the Treasury," and he demanded to be shown the necessity for all appropriations. He offered scores of amendments reducing the size of appropriations. Garfield's biographer comments that Garfield

good-naturedly dealt with him [Holman] as an established institution, explaining the merits of any clause that Holman questioned, and sometimes inducing him to withdraw amendments or objections. When he proved immovable, or when time was lacking, Garfield tried to override him by appealing to the good sense of the House, sometimes poking a little fun at his narrowness. Frequently to avoid delay, he accepted Holman's suggestions on small points.<sup>51</sup>

One measure to which Holman objected was the joint resolution which authorized the survey and marking of the boundary between the territory of the United States and the possessions of Great Britain from the Lake of the Woods to the summit of the Rocky Mountains. It provided that the President of the United States appoint a commission to determine the boundary line, and that the sum of \$100,000 be appropriated to cover the necessary expenses of the commission. It seemed to Holman that this appropriation was much too high. "The truth is," he said, "that whatever concerns the operations of this Government outside of its own limits, and in connection with other Governments, is uniformly made the pretense for extravagance in expenditures." He compared this case with the commission which had recently been sent to Geneva to settle the Alabama claims against England. At that time three attorneys, including Caleb Cushing

were sent to represent the United States, while England sent only one. He felt that regular government engineers were competent to perform the necessary survey work, but under this bill many special astronomers and engineers and other officers would be employed. Holman's motion to reduce the appropriation to \$50,000 was accepted, and the joint resolution was passed in that form.<sup>52</sup>

One of Holman's Indiana friends wrote him, commending him for the stand which he had taken against this appropriation measure:

Most honored sir: I have always thought I would write to you to send you a cheering word to you, well the people here are so well pleased with your official carrier in congress that they are loud in your praise but that fifty thousand that you saved on the funds voted to establish the boundary line between the british and american possessions has made you General good Substantial friends in the republican party here.<sup>53</sup>

Another bill was reported by Garfield, which carried an appropriation of \$50,000 for instruments to be used in making observations on "the transit of Venus" in 1874. Holman said, briefly, "I think that Venus can get along without further legislation. I object." There was, naturally, great laughter throughout the House.<sup>54</sup> However, when the miscellaneous appropriation bill was brought up, this item was included. Holman was evidently caught napping, for it went through unopposed.<sup>55</sup> The next year, when \$100,000 was asked in the "Sundry Civil Appropriation Bill" to fit out naval vessels for the expedition, Holman moved to strike it out. He looked on it as a proposition

to give lucrative employment to certain elegant gentlemen of leisure who think they have a God-given right to live on the labor of other people. . . . The movements of that goddess among the heavenly bodies are well enough for curious and speculative inquiry but you have no right to tax the people for any such purpose.<sup>56</sup>

He also opposed a bill for the upkeep of a naval station at Mound City, Illinois. He saw no reason why such a station should be retained. He understood that there was no public necessity for it. He called attention to the fact that the United States had more such establishments than other nations having much more



naval power: "Everybody knows that three navy-yards on the Atlantic sea-board and one on the Pacific are all that are required. Yet we are keeping up now, when our navy amounts to practically nothing, four unnecessary navy-yards." Such a measure would only increase the number of persons in the employment of the government, while the people demanded a policy of retrenchment and economy.<sup>57</sup>

Holman criticized several items in the bill making appropriations for the consular and diplomatic expenses of the government for the year ending June 30, 1873. An attempt was made to transfer the mission to Russia from second to first class, with the increase of the minister's salary from \$12,000 to \$17,000 in gold. Holman believed that there was no good public reason for such an increase in the cost of our foreign diplomacy, "especially when everyone knows that the office is virtually a sinecure. There are literally no duties there for a minister to perform." He insisted that "this Republic is better represented abroad by a display of its wise frugality and republican simplicity than in imitating the profligacy and extravagance of monarchies." The Russian government, he declared, was entitled to no high considerations from the United States, because it was a government of "sanguinary aggression upon the rights of mankind"—a government whose "fierce ambition" had "bathed the continent of Europe with its best blood." He pointed out that the United States had practically no commerce of any kind with Russia. He refused to give his vote of appreciation for such a despotism. The United States had already paid to Russia \$7,200,000 "for the ice-fields in Alaska" in appreciation of her "cheap expression of friendship" during the Civil War, and he felt that no additional expression of friendship should be made by the American government.<sup>58</sup>

He opposed the appointment of a secretary for the Japanese legation at \$3,500 a year. He believed that there was no more necessity for a minister to Japan "than there is for a minister to the Comanche Indians." A commercial agent, he thought, was all that was needed in Japan, but it seemed to be the policy of the government to spend money "for the purpose of enabling idle gentlemen, who have nothing else to do, to go abroad and live at the public expense." He charged that "Everything per-

taining to our foreign relations is conducted upon a more expensive and extravagant basis than any other service that we have." He trusted that the United States would never have any commerce with Japan. He then assumed the role of prophet:

The time will come when this chain of cobwebs which now binds the industry and labor of this country to the chariot-wheels of individual interests will be swept away, and we shall have in power here men who will weigh measures with reference to the public welfare, and not with the view of creating offices for the benefit of idle gentlemen.<sup>59</sup>

This same attitude was expressed again during the closing days of the forty-second Congress, when the House was considering a bill increasing the salaries of members and officers of the legislative assemblies of the territories of the United States. In the elections of 1872, both parties gave the most solemn assurance of retrenchment and reform, but since then scarcely a bill had come before the House to be acted upon that did not increase a salary or create a new office. Holman thought that the very fact that two great political parties of the country had favored retrenchment and reform was some evidence that the people themselves demanded it. Yet Congress was giving to the people "an example of unprecedented extravagance unknown during the loose legislation of the war."<sup>60</sup>

It was this session of Congress which enacted the infamous "Salary Grab" act of March 3, 1873. This law increased the salaries of the President to \$50,000, of the Vice-President to \$10,000, of the Justices of the Supreme Court to \$10,000, with \$500 extra to the Chief Justice, of Cabinet members to \$10,000, of assistant secretaries of departments to \$6,500, of the Speaker of the House to \$10,000, and of Congressmen to \$7,500, plus mileage expense. An especially obnoxious feature was that the increase was to apply to the Congress just ending. This retroactive feature produced a vehement popular protest. It was called the "back pay steal," and many members of Congress were reluctant to accept the extra salary.

During the debates on the bill, Holman was confident that Congress could not afford to increase these salaries. He said that they could not present any good reason for such action. He declared:



I have tried to call the attention of the Committee on Appropriations to this fact, that every appropriation of money beyond what is imperatively demanded for the public service is not only mischievous to the extent of the unnecessary expenditure in that particular interest, but it stimulates cupidity in public affairs and gives rise to further unnecessary appropriations and corrupting venality in office.<sup>61</sup>

He was also confident that the increase of salaries called for in this particular measure, however much to be condemned, would not be the greatest evil by any means. "The inevitable result of this increase will be to produce a corresponding increase of all the other salaries of the 60,000 employees of the Government and an increase in every branch of the public expenditures." He said that "There is no halfway ground, no stopping point in a popular government between economy and corrupt expenditure," He told the Congressmen:

You are rapidly leaving the old path of safety, the simplicity of a Republic. You are destroying the motive of duty and honor in public office and stimulating the spirit of venality and corruption. The result is easily foreseen. The manly and honorable aspiration for public confidence and reputable position in national affairs rapidly gives way to the corrupt struggle for office and the venal and corrupt use of official power.<sup>62</sup>

To Holman, the measure was utterly indefensible, with the expense of living steadily declining, when laboring men were getting less compensation than formerly and feeling more keenly the burden of taxation, when the revenues of the government were falling off, when the public debt was actually increasing and new elements of taxation must be sought. He especially protested against the increase by members of Congress of their own salaries, and extending that increase backward.<sup>63</sup>

The nation, forming an opinion upon well-considered facts, condemned the action of Congress in the passage of the act, demanded its repeal, and asked that Congress restore things to their former conditions as completely as possible. Every utterance of the people demanded it—the public press, public conventions of all parties, and, as far as it could be done, the ballot-box.

Holman himself did not accept the increase which the act provided. His course in this matter, however, is somewhat ob-

scure. Among the clippings found in his possession, is one entitled "Holman's Grab—The True Story of His Back Pay—How The Money Was Collected and Covered Back into the Treasury." It was from the special correspondent of the *Cincinnati Gazette*, and was dated Indianapolis, September 18, but no year is given. It was published in a Republican paper of Franklin County. It refers to a letter from the Acting Secretary of the Treasury, dated Washington, September 13, 1876. It appeared from the record of the Department that Holman had been paid the added \$4,460 on March 12, 1873, but this same amount was paid back into the treasury in Holman's name on May 16, 1873. It was said that Holman took his back pay "like a little man," and two months later, when the drift of public sentiment was against him, carried it back and received a "certificate of deposit" for it. It was charged further that Holman still held this certificate, which entitled him to the money whenever he asked for it. It was believed, therefore, that Holman had not returned the money in good faith, as the government could not use it as its own as long as Holman held the certificate. It was claimed that he published the fact that he had returned the money on the very day when he secured his certificate of deposit. The article denounced Holman for such "demagoguery."<sup>64</sup>

Another article, evidently written in 1876, praised Holman for his action. Speaking of him as the Democratic candidate for Congress, it declared that his record in Congress was "spotless" and commended him for returning the "salary grab" to the United States treasury as an "honest man." He was characterized as an example of

one of the very few instances where a man enters Congress financially poor, serves sixteen years in the National Legislature, and at the end comes out poor. This is a rare example, and it takes heroic virtue and honesty to pass through sixteen years of contact with the corruptions of the National Capitol and at last come out unspotted and pure in private and public character. Mr. Holman was a man to accomplish this thing which seems almost incredible in these days.<sup>65</sup>

Holman's conviction had always been that the former pay of



a member of Congress was a very ample compensation. Speaking for his own constituents,

and for that great body of citizens with whom I have ever acted—the Democratic party—I unhesitatingly assert that on this subject there is, on their part, but one voice, that this salary law must be repealed and restoration made, so that the compensation of members of the last Congress who are members of this Congress shall be upon the basis of the old law. And they further declare that the integrity and purity of this government demand an actual reduction of these and all other official salaries which have been from time to time increased.<sup>66</sup>

Like other leading statesmen of the period, both Democrats and Republicans, Holman demanded reform in the civil service. One of the most glaring political abuses of the day was the spoils system. Not only did scandals occasionally appear in the higher offices, but minor officials were often appointed as a reward for services in the elections and for contributions made to the party campaign funds. Attempts had been made to bring about a reform in this matter, but it was not until 1871 that Congress established what is known as the first civil service commission, which formulated rules for appointment to federal offices. This law was enacted and promulgated by President Grant in April, 1872.

Holman was in sympathy with measures, the tendency of which would be to reform abuses which existed in the administration of public affairs, because he felt that a republic could not long exist unless there be purity and honesty in the conduct of its affairs. He contended that:

When the great powers of Government, designed only to promote the welfare of the whole people, are prostituted to individual aggrandizement, that the few may amass fortunes at the expense of the general industry, when the agents of the people in the vicious struggle for wealth and power have lost sight of the public good, and public office is sought as an avenue to corrupt and dishonest gain, reform, thorough and complete, is the only path of safety.<sup>67</sup>

He declared that the existing conditions required not only an honest administration of affairs and a system by which men should be appointed to office because of their competence and honesty, and not for mere partisan services, but it also required

"a remorseless reduction of executive patronage and of the revenues and expenditures which are the hot-beds of corruption." He said that the enormous increase in public offices ought to be condemned because

it entails unnecessary burdens on the people who have borne the weight of excessive taxation . . . because it invests the national Executive with a dangerous power in the employment of swarms of men whose services are not required for the purposes of Government, and who, conscious of the object of the employment, are the more unscrupulous and subservient in doing the will of their employer; because it demoralizes the public service everywhere until the millions of money drawn from the patient toil of the people are looked upon by the multitude who live and who are struggling to live off of the labor of other men as the legitimate prize of perfidy and fraud.<sup>68</sup>

He charged that the civil service was organized for personal aggrandizement and political power, and as a result the American government, which ought to be the most frugal and the least oppressive to its people, was rapidly becoming, through venality in the public service, "the most expensive of all Governments, if not the most profligate in expenditure." In spite of the fate of the measures inaugurated by the commissioners of civil service reform, Holman saw no ray of hope. It was all too clear to him that the men who were in control of public affairs in and out of Congress did not intend there should be any reform, "for the very corruption that robs the people and alarms good men everywhere is the sinew of party strength." He said:

the only hope for reform is in the people who are more interested in the purity of their Government than in the spoils of office and the triumph of party. The people . . . will rise superior to party obligations, and will take care that in Congress and out of Congress there shall be retrenchment and reform, and that their Government shall be administered for the common good.<sup>69</sup>

The last session of the forty-second Congress was rocked to its very foundations by the charges of bribery which were made against many of its members. The Credit Mobilier was the construction company which built the Union Pacific Railroad at an enormous profit to its stockholders. Oakes Ames, a Representative from Massachusetts, had interested several men in high



stations to accept stock in the company, and these men, knowingly or otherwise, were to be used for the benefit of the railroad. The charges included the Vice-President of the United States and Vice-President-elect, several Senators and Representatives, ex-members of Congress, and the Secretary of the Treasury.

During the campaign of 1872, it had been generally rumored that such a transaction had been made, and when Congress convened in December, the Speaker, James G. Blaine, who was one of the accused, after calling Samuel S. Cox to the chair, took a seat on the floor of the House. Then addressing the chair, he said that such a charge demanded a "prompt, thorough, and impartial" investigation. He then moved such an investigation, and demanded that a special committee of five be appointed by the Speaker pro-tempore, "whose duty it shall be to investigate and ascertain whether any member of this House was bribed by Oakes Ames or any other person or corporation in any manner touching his legislative duty." Holman spoke briefly in favor of the adoption of this resolution. The committee appointed consisted of Luke P. Bland of Vermont, Nathaniel P. Banks of Massachusetts, James B. Beck of Kentucky, William E. Niblack of Indiana, and George W. McCrary of Iowa.<sup>70</sup> The Senate took similar action.

The investigation committee reported their findings, and recommended that several of the accused be expelled from Congress because of their complicity in the Credit Mobilier scandals. Since it was shown that in some cases bribery had occurred before the men were elected to Congress, the men could not now be expelled. Holman protested against this doctrine "as one of the most pernicious and fatal to the purity of government," and "if, with the corrupting power your system of subsidies has created, the doctrine shall prevail that a bribed member, no matter when bribed, if prior to his election, and unknown to his constituents, may still give his voice in the enactment of laws, the very depths of public corruption will be reached."

To Holman, this was the first open and undisguised contest between "the great and irresponsible corporation" and the people. The question at issue, he said, was whether the American people or the great private corporations should be represented

on the floor of the House, control the legislation of Congress against the people, and promote their own aggrandizement at the expense of the people. He felt that his course of opposition to these great interests through the past decade had been vindicated.<sup>71</sup>

Holman was considered as a possible Democratic candidate for governor of Indiana in 1872,<sup>72</sup> but it was generally felt that he could better serve his constituents in Congress as "the watchdog of the treasury" and as a friend of the soldier. Judge James Roberts of Madison wrote a letter typical of many which came to Holman at this time:

I have talked within the last three months with hundreds of soldiers and I have never yet had one to leave whether Republican or Democrat but what expressed "don't let Judge Holman run for Governor but insist on him staying in Congress until the soldier is properly cared for by the General Government, if he leaves his present position we will have no friends in Congress, and he can stay where he is as long as there is a surviving soldier in the district. We will always vote for him." This, Judge, is not flattery, but *solid truths*—I have made this as concise as I could to give you some idea of the feelings of your soldier friends in this vicinity.<sup>73</sup>

Another letter included the following passage:

I see your friends are urging that you should be Nominated for Gov. I do not favor this. To take you from your present position would be to endanger our Congressional District—*with you* I have no fears—and you can do *us* and the *Nation* more good in your present Situation—If you should not be our next Candidate for Congress, who, who can succeed—. . . . To be short—I am for Keeping you where you *are* and nominating Hon. T. A. Hendricks for Gov.<sup>74</sup>

In the elections of 1872, Holman defeated William Wirt Herod, the Republican candidate, as Representative from the third district,<sup>75</sup> and consequently he became a member of the forty-third Congress, which met in December, 1873. He was appointed to the Committees on War Claims and Commerce.<sup>76</sup> As usual, he kept demanding reductions in the various appropriation bills which appeared. Because of the threatening war with Spain, growing out of the *Virginius* case, the Secretary of the Navy, George M. Robeson, asked for additional appropria-



tions to put the navy in condition for immediate and active service. It was also requested that appropriations which might be made should, in case of emergency, be transferred from one bureau to another, by special order of the President.

In time of real danger, or in reasonable apprehension of danger, Holman would not by his vote embarrass any department of the government having charge of public affairs, but he did not accept the general belief that there was real danger in the immediate future, and he doubted the propriety of an extraordinary provision of this kind. He was not willing that there should be incorporated into the law a proposition which would prevent Congress from knowing whether the money was to be expended for the purpose of supplying a deficiency or to meet an extraordinary emergency. He wanted the law to remain as it was, unless Garfield, the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, could declare that the pending emergency made it necessary "to remove this ordinary safeguard upon the expenditure of the public funds."<sup>77</sup>

When the bill was introduced calling for additional appropriations to meet certain deficiencies which had occurred in the various departments, Holman reminded Congress of the promises of retrenchment and reform which they had recently made to the people. To him, the weight of taxation which rested upon the people, the almost empty treasury, "the spectacle of profound indifference to items of expenditure aggregating into millions displayed in this House at the present time and for months past," was most remarkable. He opposed the item of \$18,000 to enlarge the Capitol grounds, as such a project was "without justification or excuse," and as one of those acts of legislation in which the original wrong necessitates thereafter a constant expenditure. He declared that it was a part of "that rank system of real-estate operations out of which millions have been made by successful adventurers through the aid of Congress at the expense not simply of the national Treasury but of the national honor." Such a project would mean, he said, "wide-spread demoralization, dishonor, and corruption."<sup>78</sup>

He favored a reduction in the appropriations for fortifications from \$850,000 to \$50,000. He saw no necessity for the huge item proposed. No invasion threatened the American

shores, he said, "not only on account of our geographical position, but by reason of the martial spirit of our people, which of itself is a fortification stronger and more effective than all the fortification that could be erected."<sup>79</sup>

It was during this period that the western states were clamoring for some action by Congress which would curtail the power of the railroads and remedy the abuses which resulted from that power. The report of the Windom Committee of 1874 offered no relief. Only governmental regulation would satisfy the West. The McCrary bill came before the House in 1874, calling for the creation of a federal commission with powers of fixing the maximum rates, summoning witnesses, investigating complaints, and preparing charges against the carriers.

The argument had been advanced by opponents of this bill that Congress would be delegating legislative powers to the commissioners. Holman agreed that Congress could not delegate such powers, but he saw nothing in the bill which called for such delegation. He believed that because Congress has the power to regulate commerce between the states, it also has the power to determine what is a fair and reasonable rate, and can prescribe the rules by which such rate can be ascertained. He saw that the power of the railroad companies could at least produce conflicts in the laws of the several states, and thus render all legislation, except as to purely local traffic, abortive; so that, from the absence of uniformity of legislation in the states through which a given railroad passed, it would be impossible that the rights of the citizens should be properly protected. No relief could be found, he thought, except through federal legislation.<sup>80</sup>

So great was popular disapproval of the various measures enacted into law by the Republican Party, that the elections of 1874 brought the Democrats into control of the House for the first time since 1860, and the Republicans had to adapt themselves to the unfamiliar role of a minority party.<sup>81</sup> Holman continued to represent the fifth district of Indiana in this forty-fourth Congress, having defeated Benjamin F. Claypool.<sup>82</sup> Although Holman had served on several committees when the Republicans were in power, it was not until 1876 that he was to assume leadership in the handling of legislation. For sixteen



years his party had been shut out of real training in committee responsibilities. Holman, Cox and a few other Democrats, were highly skilled in criticism, but they had not yet learned how to frame and carry constructive legislation.<sup>83</sup>

In the contest for the speakership, Michael C. Kerr of Indiana received the election with one hundred seventy-three votes to one hundred six for James G. Blaine. Holman was appointed to the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, and served with Samuel J. Randall, of Pennsylvania, on the Appropriations Committee. Garfield, who retired from the committee,<sup>84</sup> thought that the appointments were very weak. He wrote to a friend:

The committees announced on Monday have taken everybody by surprise. I do not think there has been so weak a lot of chairmen in 40 years. Out of 34 of the most important committees, the late Slave States have 21 chairmen and New England none. They left me off the Appropriations Committee avowedly on the ground that my thorough knowledge of the matter would be an embarrassment to the chairman. In some respects I am better pleased with the change, for it will give me less work and I shall have more time to engage in a free fight on the floor.<sup>85</sup>

However, Garfield showed a kindly readiness to cooperate with Randall and Holman in keeping down expenses, but he protested against some of the proposals as short-sighted.<sup>86</sup>

One of the first things which Holman did after the House was organized was to submit a resolution which amended the rules of procedure. This measure, famous as the "Holman Resolution," declared: "Nor shall provisions in any such bill [appropriation], or amendments thereto, changing existing law, be in order, except such as, being germane to the bill, retrench expenditure." The resolution was adopted on January 17, 1876.<sup>87</sup>

For the first time in his already long career in Congress, Holman was faced with a weak opposition toward his viewpoint on the question of subsidies. He lost no time in introducing into the House the following resolution, which was adopted by an overwhelming vote:

That in the judgment of this House, in the present condition of the financial affairs of the Government, no subsidies in money, bonds, public lands, indorsements, or by pledge of the public credit, should be granted by Congress to associations or corporations engaged or proposing to engage in public or private enterprises; and that all appropriations from

the public Treasury ought to be limited at this time to such amounts only as shall be imperatively demanded by the public service.<sup>88</sup>

It was only natural that as second member of the very important Committee on Appropriations, Holman's chief attention throughout this Congress should be directed to financial matters. Every bill carrying an appropriation was carefully scrutinized, and many times he opposed items which were accepted by some of the members of the committee. Such was the case in regard to a bill providing for the salaries and retirement of certain professors at the United States Military Academy. He had made a detailed study of the pay of professors in private institutions and had come to the conclusion that such men were receiving far less than was being urged for the military professors. He also found professors employed by the government to teach military tactics in various literary institutions, and he feared that this created extravagance and dissatisfaction. He spoke for the bill without the proposed increase to professors in the military institutions:

If this bill should pass and commend itself to the consideration of this House as a measure of reasonable retrenchment of expenditures which gentlemen believe the public service will justify, it will give every earnest assurance that the work before us will be well accomplished. . . . If it pass, the people of the country, now looking to Congress with the earnestness never before known in our history in times of peace, will begin to breathe freely and indulge in hope.<sup>89</sup>

Holman's attitude toward expenditures is well illustrated by his remarks of February 7, 1876 on the Diplomatic and Consular Appropriation Bill. He found that the ordinary expenditures of the government had reached the sum of \$179,166,209.90, independent of the public debt. He showed how that figure had grown from \$62,000,000 which had been appropriated for the first year of Lincoln's administration:

We are here in the midst of a city where vast expenditures of money are made by the Government in countless forms, and the depression and stagnation of business in every field of industry, the want and destitution of multitudes of laboring men unable to keep the wolf from the door because labor cannot find employment, the actual suffering among our people for want of food and raiment, are less important in this Capital



than perhaps anywhere else. And for that reason it is well to consider the expression of opinion which comes up to us daily through the public press as indicating the judgment of the country upon the absolute necessity of severe and positive retrenchment in expenditures of Government.<sup>90</sup>

He assured the House that the people were absolutely unable to meet the present burden of taxation, and that the only solution was in the reduction of expenditures, which could be done without impairing the efficiency of any function of the government. This opinion, however, was undoubtedly erroneous, at least as far as the diplomatic and consular service was concerned, as the United States was playing an increasingly important role in foreign affairs. Holman, of course, was a champion of simplicity and frugality in all governmental matters, and he saw no reason for a pretentious display of wealth in the various agencies of the government. Under his policy, however, only wealthy men could officially represent the United States abroad.

In the next session the consular and diplomatic service again came in for attack by Holman. He criticized the general policy of the government in spending large amounts of money to maintain the service abroad. "The truth is that this whole diplomatic system ought to be abolished . . . and in the enlightened progress of the ages it will soon disappear in every one of the important powers of the world," he argued. He thought that "the reasons for retaining this relic of the feudal ages have become entirely obsolete."<sup>91</sup>

Holman favored the measure which would reduce the salaries of Congressmen from \$5,000 to \$4,500. He thought that a citizen in public employment should receive the same compensation substantially that he would receive if he discharged the same service with the same integrity and competency in private employment. While he was willing to "co-operate most cheerfully" with attempts to reduce Congressional salaries, he asked that the amount should not be fixed so low that a man "wealthy only in his capacity to serve the country, and having no other wealth," should be driven out of public employment. He felt that if the salary were too high, it would be an incentive to venality, which "walks our streets in the glare of noon-day; it displays itself everywhere, in every field of public employ-

ment."<sup>92</sup> For the same reasons, he favored reducing the salary of the president of the United States to \$25,000 per year.<sup>93</sup>

He plead for a reduction of salaries in the Post Office Department and federal bureaus. He reasoned that the larger the income of the government, the greater would be the temptation to extravagance. As long as Congress appropriated a large margin for expenditures beyond the wants of the government, the reign of extravagance would continue. He desired that the various departments of the government should realize "that it is the determination of the legislative department to exercise a rigorous control over expenditures and to maintain a strict economy." He did not think that the people could indulge in any hope of economical government as long as Congress "appropriated moneys that cannot be demonstrated to be absolutely necessary to the public service."<sup>94</sup>

In the second session of the forty-fourth Congress, which met after the elections of 1876, an attempt was again made by certain members to increase the salaries of Congressmen, but Holman firmly resisted it. One of his critics referred to his program as "two-cent economy." In his reply, Holman pointed out that this "two-cent economy" had reduced the expenses of the government for the current year by \$25,000,000. He declared that it was "not a false attempt at economy. It was an honest attempt at retrenchment."<sup>95</sup>

As the fiscal year of 1876 neared its close, President Grant sent a message to the House, deploring the fact that no provision had yet been made to appropriate money to carry on the functions of government. He submitted a request to the effect that if such appropriations were not passed in time, the current appropriations should hold over for the next year until the new appropriations should be made. Throughout the session both parties had done considerable haggling over the appropriations, with the result that nothing had been accomplished. Holman welcomed the President's message, as it really admonished the House to speedily pass the appropriation bill which was then pending. This bill called for a moderate reduction in expenditures. It was an answer to the general public demand for a reasonable retrenchment. It was Holman's belief that, "instead of embarrassing the Government, the retrenchment will give vigor



to every branch of the Administration, by promoting its purity and driving out the low and unworthy motives of venality from the public employment."<sup>96</sup>

In 1876, Congress had been asked to appropriate \$1,500,000 to aid in the celebration of the centennial of American Independence at Philadelphia. But the measure brought forth a condemnation from Holman. He declared that the people in general were opposed to increasing their taxes for this purpose. While they favored a suitable and proper exhibition of their achievements during a hundred years of freedom, yet such a display of the taxing power of government involved in this bill would not "harmonize well with the free spirit and personal independence for which the past century is so wonderfully entitled to commemoration." He did not think that it was expedient to appropriate such a sum out of the public treasury to a corporation of citizens for the purpose of celebrating, "either by an international exposition of the industries of the nation or otherwise," the first centennial anniversary of American Independence. It was not a legitimate and proper act on the part of the representatives of the people, he said. He implored the House

not to yield to the strong and patriotic motive to make the appropriation, for with a patriotic motive you confirm and establish a dangerous precedent. At the end of a hundred years we are in the main, in the institutions of government, without a blemish upon our record. . . . Entering upon a new century, I would appeal to gentlemen that seeing, as all must see, the perils of yielding to demands upon the public resources beyond the severe purposes of government, not to make this mistake. Let us now and here by a great example end the fatal policy of subsidy. . . . Let us make the refusal of this grant an example for frugal government, a memorial of a high purpose to limit the demands upon the industries of our people to the imperative demands of government frugally administered, to be appealed to through all the years of the coming century.<sup>97</sup>

Much credit should be given to the work of Randall and Holman, the successive chairmen of the Committee on Appropriations in the forty-fourth Congress, for their accomplishments in reducing expenditures. Powerful lobbies had been at work in Washington, but had not achieved victory. There was much truth in Holman's statement, made on the last day of the session, when he reviewed the work of his committee:

No scheme of public plunder has been successful, no "rebel war claim" has reached the Treasury, no new offices have been created, but a multitude have been abolished; no salaries have been increased, but a large number have been diminished; no new scheme of public expenditure has been inaugurated, while many have been discontinued. The general expenditures have been immensely reduced, promoting the integrity and efficiency of every department; and those partial reforms may at least inspire the hope that the work of reform shall not falter, that their Government shall not longer be administered in the interest of favored classes or as the mere dispenser of lavish patronage, but for the common and equal benefit of all.<sup>98</sup>

Holman naturally was a believer in the right of the people to petition their government and he was willing to present a memorial from the Women's Temperance League of Winchester, Indiana, signed by 1,104 citizens of that state, mostly ladies, asking congressional legislation to promote temperance in the service of the United States. He asked unanimous consent that the memorial be printed in the *Record*, and referred to the Committee on Ways and Means. There was no objection, the memorial was referred to the committee, and ordered to be printed, but obviously no definite action was taken on it.<sup>99</sup>

Holman presented another petition which met the same fate. It was signed by seventy-eight citizens of Indiana—forty-three men and thirty-five women—asking for a sixteenth amendment to the Constitution of the United States prohibiting the several states from disfranchising United States citizens on account of sex. The petition was lost in the Judiciary Committee.<sup>100</sup>

Before the second session of the forty-fourth Congress met in December, 1876, Michael C. Kerr, its Speaker, had died. Holman introduced a resolution when the House convened, to the effect that they proceed to the election of a Speaker *viva voce*. Samuel J. Randall of Pennsylvania was elevated to the post with one hundred sixty-two votes. James A. Garfield received eighty-two. Holman, of course, voted for his friend Randall whose place he now took as chairman of the very important Committee on Appropriations. Holman was requested by Randall to administer to him the oath prescribed by law.<sup>101</sup>

It was during this last session of the forty-fourth Congress that the Joint High Commission was created. This was the result of the disputed election between Rutherford B. Hayes and



Samuel J. Tilden for the presidency. When Congress met in December, 1876, the outcome of the election was the principal issue. The Senate was Republican while the Democrats controlled the House. An advisory committee of Democratic members had been appointed by a Democratic caucus early in December, and this committee, of which Holman was one of the eleven members, kept in touch with the situation. The members met repeatedly and, according to Abram S. Hewitt, were fully consulted throughout all the discussions of the Joint High Commission, which was composed of eight Republicans and seven Democrats.<sup>102</sup> The House Committee, however, could do little, and each vote taken by the Joint High Commission was strictly on party lines, eight to seven. Hayes was declared the winner. The Democrats bitterly talked of a "stolen election" and dubbed it "The Fraud of 1876."

Thus ended temporarily Holman's career in Congress. He had served throughout the "Tragic Era" of the Reconstruction period. When the period opened with the fortieth Congress, Holman's party constituted a "hopeless, demoralized, suspected minority." But gradually the Democrats increased in power, especially in filibustering against objectionable legislation. Holman, like other honest men of the party, protested against the political and military reconstruction acts, including the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth amendments to the Constitution. He had opposed the principles of the protective tariff as unfair taxes on the laboring man for the benefit of a few capitalists. He also fought against the granting of subsidies in lands, money, bonds, and other benefits to railroad and other corporations. He advocated the system of free homesteads for actual settlers and soldiers. He championed the policy of placing silver and greenbacks on a par with gold as legal tender, and opposed the act which provided for the resumption of specie payments. He spoke out against the national banking system and favored a "free banking system." He consistently advocated a program of "economy and retrenchment," in which he was generally thwarted while the Republicans were in power, but which was finally to be realized, in a large measure, during his last Congress in the Reconstruction period.<sup>103</sup> It was claimed by his friends and by persons in a position to judge, that the expenses of the

government for the year 1876-1877 were reduced more than \$10,000,000 less than in any year prior thereto since the Civil War, without producing any deficiency. To Holman has been given much of the credit for this reduction.<sup>104</sup>



## CHAPTER VII

### CHAMPION OF JEFFERSONIANISM

**F**OLLOWING his retirement from Congress in 1877, Holman did not actively participate in national politics for the next few years. During the interval, however, he was one of the leading figures in the Democratic Party in Indiana. Although his friends had considered him for the governorship on several occasions, yet it was not until 1876 that his name was actually used for the first time in the contest for the nomination. Under the state redistricting program the fifth district became "the largest Republican district in the State of Indiana," said Holman.<sup>1</sup> He had won the election in 1874 in the district, but it was quite evident that he hesitated to court disaster in 1876.

In the district convention, which met at Richmond on August 2, 1875, Holman's name was suggested as a candidate for representative by W. A. Bickle. He was nominated by acclamation, "with an enthusiasm which argues an increased majority for the present popular and brilliant incumbent." Resolutions were adopted which were favorable to Holman, indorsing unqualifiedly and without reserve his course, and earnestly commending him for his vigilance and persistence in striving to secure retrenchment and reform in the departments of the government, and for his efforts "in seeking to overthrow that ruinous and despotic law which has almost deprived honest labor of the means of support, known as the act for the resumption of specie payment."<sup>2</sup> The "Independents," in Wayne and Randolph counties were solid for Holman, because they said he represented the "true interests of this section on the important financial questions now before the country."<sup>3</sup>

The Democratic Party of Indiana met in state convention at Indianapolis on Wednesday, April 19, 1876. There was a large and enthusiastic delegation in attendance. The names of Congressmen Holman and Franklin Landers were presented as

candidates for governor. Holman himself was not at the convention, but Landers was present. It appears that Holman's candidacy was spontaneous, with no one in charge of it, and with no one having authority to speak for him. John B. Stoll, then editor of the *Ligonier Banner*, and later the powerful editor of the *South Bend Tribune*, urged Holman's nomination with vigor and enthusiasm. Stoll was active and energetic in espousing the cause of the famous "Watchdog of the Treasury," although there had been no correspondence on the subject between the two men. Stoll felt assured that Samuel J. Tilden would be the Democratic candidate for President, "and that therefore a man of Judge Holman's fame as a champion of retrenchment and reform ought to head the state ticket."<sup>4</sup>

During the balloting, it was seen that the race between Holman and Landers would be close. When the last county had been called, Landers asked permission to make a statement. Meanwhile, the tabulation was completed, and the leaders of the Holman forces were given a tip that their man had been nominated. But when Landers finally began to speak, "bedlam broke loose . . . . The yelling was terrific. Landers was shouted at to sit down, but he didn't." The Holman men had suddenly realized that "it was the determination of the Landers following to break up the convention in a row if Holman were made the nominee." At last Landers was allowed to speak.

Landers declared that before announcing himself as a candidate for the nomination for governor, he had talked with Holman, and had received Holman's word that he did not wish the nomination. He demanded that if there was anyone in the convention authorized to speak for Holman, he should rise and state Holman's attitude exactly. As no one responded to this challenge, Landers then declared in view of what had taken place between himself and Holman, there could be no contest between the parties to that compact. He then withdrew from the race, and the Holman forces, in spite of the fact that their candidate had already been nominated, withdrew his name also in the interest of peace and harmony. James D. ("Blue Jeans") Williams, of Vincennes, also a Congressman, was thereupon, on



motion of Austin H. Brown, of Indianapolis, nominated by acclamation.<sup>5</sup>

In the fall elections, Williams' majority for governor over General Benjamin Harrison was 5,139. Holman, who had again become a candidate for Congress, was defeated by General Thomas M. Browne from the fifth district. The Indiana delegation in Congress was to consist of four Democrats and nine Republicans, due largely to the gerrymandering of the state by the General Assembly in 1873. The fact that Tilden ran 5,000 votes ahead of Hayes for the presidency indicated the general effect of the gerrymander.<sup>6</sup>

In 1878, Holman was again a candidate for the nomination to the national House, but when the fourth congressional district met in convention at Greensburg, General James B. Foley was nominated on the first ballot. Judge Holman had been the strongest competitor against Foley, but after the nomination was made, he, with his characteristic generosity, arose and addressed the convention, saying that he felt satisfied with the result and that he would give his support to the nominee.<sup>7</sup>

In the state convention which met in Indianapolis on February 20, 1878, few, if any, among the delegates had any doubt as to the outcome of the fall elections, because of the popular indignation over what was considered the "electoral fraud" of 1876, when Hayes was declared the winner over Tilden in the national contest. In the state convention, the committee on permanent organization had under consideration the names of Governor Hendricks and Congressman Holman for permanent chairman, but the friends of the latter gracefully yielded to the naming of Hendricks for this post of honor. Holman was made a member of the important Committee on Resolutions.<sup>8</sup>

In 1880, the state convention was faced with a sharp contest over the nomination for governor. Holman and Landers were again considered. Colonel Isaac P. Gray of Randolph County, Colonel C. C. Matson of Greencastle, Judge Alexander C. Downey of Ohio County, and Robert C. Ball of Fort Wayne, were also mentioned. The balloting narrowed down to a contest between Landers and Gray. On the final ballot, there was a difference of only about a dozen votes, and on the motion of Ball, which Holman seconded, the nomination of Landers was

made unanimous. In the election for Congress, eight Republicans and five Democrats were victorious.<sup>9</sup> Holman, who defeated John O. Cravens, became the Representative from the old fourth district again, although Garfield had won a plurality of over six thousand in the state over General Winfield Scott Hancock.<sup>10</sup>

Holman received many congratulations on his election from various parts of the country. One, written on a post-card, congratulated him and the country on his re-election.<sup>11</sup> An ardent admirer declared that he was

confident if you had been nominated at Cincinnati for Vice-President Indiana would have gone Republican last Tuesday—As it is probable Indiana will be *needed* in the Democratic column in November you may still be called upon *to save Indiana and the party* by being the Vice-Presidential Candidate. If you are called I hope you will not *hesitate* to accept the honor and its responsibilities.<sup>12</sup>

When the forty-seventh Congress convened in December, 1881, the House was controlled by the Republicans, and Holman found himself again among the minority members. Consequently, he could do little of a constructive nature, but had to content himself with a policy of criticism, obstruction, and defeat, if possible, of Republican measures. It was not to be expected that he would be given a chairmanship of any important committee. He was not even appointed as a member of any such committee, but had to be satisfied with being placed on the Committee on War Claims, with whose work he had become quite familiar in previous Congresses.<sup>13</sup>

During the first few months of the session, Holman presented several petitions on various subjects. In January, he introduced four petitions from citizens of Indiana, begging Congress to enact legislation for the regulation of interstate commerce by the railroads, and for the prevention of discrimination and extortion by railroad corporations. At the same time, he presented three other petitions. One asked that the Commissioner of Agriculture be made a member of the president's Cabinet; another requested legislation to protect innocent purchasers of patented articles from fraudulent claims; and still another favored an income tax. A month later he submitted a petition from Liberty,



Union County, Indiana, for laws to suppress polygamy. He also presented a joint resolution from the General Assembly of Indiana, favoring pensions for soldiers and sailors of the Mexican War.<sup>14</sup>

Through the forty-seventh Congress, Holman again championed rigid economy in expenditures, particularly in regard to certain items for the District of Columbia. He opposed the bill which would increase the police force of the District from two hundred to three hundred men, adding \$75,000 to the expense. The bill also proposed to repeal the provision whereby only ex-service men should be appointed to these positions. Holman thought that such a change would result in the supplanting of Union soldiers and sailors by local politicians. He further attacked the bill because he felt that the people of the District should be allowed to manage their own affairs and pay their own expenses. He declared that he would never cast his vote in favor of a bill appropriating money for the District. He felt that such measures contained but two features: "the one legislates for a people wholly deprived of political rights, the other taxes the whole people of this country to relieve them from taxation."<sup>15</sup>

During this Congress, repeated attempts were made to erect public buildings in various parts of the country through federal appropriations, but each attempt met with Holman's opposition. He maintained that the necessities of the federal government in connection with public buildings were very small, requiring at most only a courtroom, a post-office, an internal-revenue office, a custom-house, and, in rare cases, a pension-office, but the appropriation bills were carrying sums from \$50,000 to \$600,000 for such purposes. The government, he said, needed a "plain, substantial, sufficient building—nothing more;" but "if the earnings of the people coined into revenue and paid into the public Treasury must be squandered in embellishments, let us at least be a little modest in the character of those embellishments."<sup>16</sup>

The appropriation of \$594,500 for the coast and geodetic survey was also criticized by Holman. He conceded that such a survey was very proper work and justified liberal appropriations, but he thought the figure mentioned was about double what it should be. The item went far beyond what the public

service actually required, and was "scarcely authorized by the present condition of affairs, and the necessities of the country."<sup>17</sup>

In the second session of this Congress, a bill was introduced appropriating money for the construction of a building for the Library of Congress. The power to fix the site of the building was to be confided in the Architect of the Capitol, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Librarian of Congress. These three men were also to determine the extent to which they should proceed in the construction of the building, without limitation. Holman was not willing to confer any such power on these men. Nor was he willing to allow a deception, as the limit provided in the bill was \$1,500,000, when everyone knew that the building would cost \$4,000,000 before it was completed. The argument had been made that the American Library Association favored the plans, but Holman produced evidence that the Association had condemned the plan "as not adapted to such a library as this Government requires." Holman believed further that a building costing \$2,000,000 "would answer all purposes." No definite action was taken by Congress during this session.<sup>18</sup>

The question came up again in the forty-eighth Congress. By this time, the appropriation requested had grown to \$8,000,000, plus \$500,000 for the site. Holman still indulged the hope that the measure would not pass. He feared that if the library were moved to some other part of the city, it would cease to be a Congressional Library within the reach of members of Congress. Furthermore, he declared that even with a full treasury, "the people still demand the same rigid economy in the administration of your Government as they required when your Treasury was comparatively empty."<sup>19</sup>

In the fiftieth Congress, Speaker John G. Carlisle appointed Holman a member of the Select Committee to Investigate the Construction of the New Library Building. After a detailed investigation, the committee reported to the House that it appeared that the total cost of the building would eventually amount to \$15,000,000. General William F. Vilas, Secretary of the Interior, who was chairman of the commission handling the construction of the building, had stopped work on it, but it was apparent that Congress would consider it necessary to appropriate the additional funds for its completion. Ultimately, said



Holman, it would be "the most gigantic structure, in cost at least, this Government has ever entered upon, not excepting even the National Capitol."<sup>20</sup>

In all the discussions that had occurred from time to time for many years on the subject of an increase of the navy, Holman listened in vain, he said, for a substantial reason why such an increase should be made. Brilliant generalities had been indulged in, patriotic speeches had been made, and pride of country appealed to, but he had not been convinced of the need to protect American commerce in times of peace, nor did he believe that the United States faced any danger in the immediate or remote future, which would justify the appropriation of \$15,000,000 called for in the pending naval bill. He would maintain both the army and the navy merely as a nucleus for national power when the emergency should arise.<sup>21</sup>

In 1887, the forty-ninth Congress was again bombarded with demands for increased naval appropriations, in the name of patriotism and for the public safety, in spite of the fact that no actual war existed and that none even remotely threatened. Holman believed that the great surplus in the treasury "that excites the cupidity of the great multitude of men who seek to live off the labor of our people" was a temptation to increased expenditures. Besides, he charged that the press of the country, "always eager to create a sensation by cries of alarm for the public safety, excites the fears of the well-meaning and timid." These were the underlying forces which were precipitating Congress into an unprecedented expenditure for warlike preparation. Holman was willing to keep up the army as it was, and to provide for a small and respectable navy, "according to the traditional policy of our Government," but he protested against what he considered to be an attempt to place the republic "on a military footing."<sup>22</sup> However, when the creation of the new navy was entered upon, substituting steel and iron ships in the main for wooden ones, even Holman generally acquiesced. It was not then expected that anything extraordinary or extravagant in the character of the navy was in contemplation.

Holman gradually came to the realization, however, that this was only a beginning, and when greater and greater demands were made, his protest became louder and louder. In 1890, he

attacked the new appropriations which were being suggested,<sup>23</sup> and in 1892 he showed how certain interested groups were demanding the building of ships for their own aggrandizement. He criticized the lobbyists in Congress. He thanked God that the American people did not call for "splendid institutions, expressive of arbitrary power, but still demand a frugal government, that will not unnecessarily tax its people in imitation of monarchical powers." They demanded, he said, a government that, in the language of Jefferson, will not "take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned." His speech was followed by prolonged applause from the Democratic side of the House.<sup>24</sup>

The assassination of President James A. Garfield in 1881 by a disappointed office-seeker, gave Holman his opportunity to protest against the enormous expenditure in salaries contained in the legislative, executive and judicial appropriation bill of 1882. This bill was a penetrating commentary on the civil service. With its more than \$19,000,000 in salaries, it was ahead of all its predecessors. Item after item showed an increase in the number of office-holders and their salaries, and this, too, in the face of general public demand that the government be brought back to a state of integrity and purity by diminishing the sources of corruption and venality in public affairs by reducing the expenditures for official employment.

Referring to the assassination of Garfield, Holman said:

If that national calamity does not teach the American people what this Government owes to itself, then no dispensation of Providence ever will. The lesson is too plain to be misapprehended. It teaches us . . . that government is to be administered as a sacred trust, for the common and equal benefit of the whole people; that no man should be recognized by public opinion as having any claim upon public office unless the service is actually required and his merits as a man and a citizen fit him for the employment that not one dollar should be appropriated from the Treasury beyond the severe necessities of the public service to tempt the unscrupulous and the venal; that even parsimony in governments is infinitely better than that lavish expenditure should create the dishonoring sentiment that the public treasure is a prize for partisan venality and advantage.<sup>25</sup>

Even after the passage of the Pendleton Act of 1883, Holman saw no hope for a beneficial reform in the civil service or its



efficiency, purity and elevation, "until the Government is administered in the spirit of our institutions and on the same general basis of economy which characterizes the great body of our people, and which controls everywhere in private occupations and employments." A bill was introduced in 1884, repealing all the provisions of law by which certain officers and employees of the United States were limited to an official term of four years. Holman believed that such a limitation of tenure was salutary for the good of the service, even though the employee might be reappointed immediately. It was an incentive to integrity and good conduct, he said, and was in harmony with the American system of Government.<sup>26</sup>

Holman did not always oppose appropriation bills. He supported the bill appropriating \$15,000 for a Civil Service Commission, because, as he said, he knew of no subject of equal magnitude which had come before Congress up to that time. He further declared that if there was any one measure "which the public service demands and which the public voice . . . requires, it is that this House shall do what they can to reform the civil service."<sup>27</sup> As a result of the overwhelming public demand, the Pendleton Act was signed by President Arthur on January 16, 1883.

Another bill which called for appropriations, and which Holman favored, was the one granting funds for the purchase of seeds to be distributed by Congressmen to their constituents. This particular bill provided for the sum of \$80,000. Holman thought this was too small an amount for the purpose. He claimed that he spoke as a farmer, and knew the needs of farmers.<sup>28</sup> He also favored the bill making an appropriation for an Army Medical Museum Building which was to contain the records of the library and museum of the Medical Department of the United States Army. This seemed to him to be a proper expenditure of money, as the collection made by the Medical Corps of the army was a valuable one and was worthy of special consideration for its preservation. He had been assured that the present building was unsafe and that the collection was exposed to peril of destruction by fire. Therefore, it seemed to him "that under all the circumstances it is better that a building of suffi-

cient dimensions, safe from fire, should be erected for the preservation of this valuable collection."<sup>29</sup>

Not all of Holman's efforts, however, were expended in discussing appropriation bills. One issue with which he was particularly concerned was that of internal revenue. This was a question which received considerable attention in the campaign of 1880. Many people were demanding a reduction in the tariff and urging an elimination of some of the objectionable internal taxes which had been imposed upon them during the Civil War. In his message to Congress in December, 1881, President Arthur advocated the removal of all the remaining internal revenue taxes, except those upon tobacco and alcoholic beverages, and also proposed modification of the tariff on imported goods. In 1882, Congress created a tariff commission to investigate the needs of American industry and to submit new schedules of duties.

The bill of 1883, which was finally reported by the Committee on Ways and Means, was most unsatisfactory to Holman. He felt that it did not in any degree meet public expectation. He was quite certain that the government could safely reduce taxation and also pay the debt at the earliest possible moment, yet he did not know which was greater evil, a public debt or an overflowing treasury. He would rather see the government "cramped for means," however, than a full treasury "open to pillage." He hoped that a reduction of the revenue would compel Congress "to abandon the countless schemes of questionable and unjustifiable expenditure now being forced upon it on the plea of an overflowing Treasury."<sup>30</sup> Holman's arguments favoring the abolition of the tax on tobacco are rather interesting. During the previous year this tax realized \$42,854,991.31. Tobacco, according to Holman, was not a luxury, but was a necessity. He cited a recent decision of the Supreme Court of Indiana, since then overruled, which held that its use to a large portion of mankind had become a necessity to human life. From this Holman reasoned:

not that human life could not be prolonged without it, for exactly the reverse is probably true, but that it has so entered into habits and methods, mental as well as physical, of men through so many ages that it has become one of the necessary things incident to human life. . . . Tobacco



may be injurious to the human system and all that, but it is a solace to the poor as well as a source of consolation to labor, and indeed to men under all conditions of life. I cannot excuse or justify this universal use of tobacco; I but state the facts. The universality of its use is a forcible argument.<sup>31</sup>

He not only spoke from the standpoint of the consumer, but also from that of the producer. He declared that a large body of people were engaged in the production of this important staple, which was the only productive industry of agriculture hedged in and embarrassed by internal taxes. He pointed out that "the farmer who cultivates tobacco in the field is subject to a most exasperating espionage and vigilance of a mercenary horde. He can only sell the fruits of his labor to persons who are licensed by the Government to purchase." Holman saw no excuse for the further continuance of "this wholly un-American system." He was convinced that this tax could be removed without any possible embarrassment to the government, with an enormous reduction of the public employees.<sup>32</sup>

He favored a tax on oleomargarine, although he thought it was an illegitimate article of commerce. This product, he insisted, competed with the production of butter, a legitimate article and one upon which the prosperity of countless homes depended. A tax on oleomargarine, he thought, was a legitimate measure of taxation. It was an article "existing through fraud, brought before the public by fraud, sold through fraud," and he submitted that it was more legitimately a subject of taxation than spirits or tobacco or any other article usually called a luxury. He opposed the patent-right system, "under which great monopolies can be built up."<sup>33</sup>

Holman did not think there had been any call from the nation in favor of relieving the banking institutions of the country from taxation, as was recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means. State, private and national banks enjoyed franchises which were not given to other groups, and he saw no reason why special franchises should not justify special taxation. He insisted that this \$11,000,000 tax upon the banks was a mild one, and one easily borne by capital employed in a form exceptionally profitable, and made so by special franchises. Nevertheless, in spite of the objections of Holman and other Democrats, the

tariff of 1883 abolished the tax on bank deposits and capital, the two-cent stamp on bank checks, the duties on certain medicines and cosmetics, and the taxes on matches. The tax on tobacco was retained, however.<sup>34</sup>

In 1882, Holman was again elected to the lower House which then had a large Democratic majority. John G. Carlisle of Covington, Kentucky, became the Speaker, and Holman was appointed to the Appropriations Committee. Randall again became chairman. The Speaker also appointed Holman as one of the two directors of the Columbia Hospital for Women and Lying-in Asylum, but four months later Holman resigned this post.<sup>35</sup>

Holman's opponents naturally attacked the various appropriation bills which came from his committee. Especially was this true in regard to the Post Office Appropriation Bill. It was charged that when providing for material to carry on the work of the Department, the appropriations were liberal, but when providing for the force, the personnel and intelligence by which the business of the Department was to be controlled, then a parsimonious and partisan purpose was developed. Holman advanced arguments to dispel these assertions. The main point of contention however, was the item reducing by five per cent the cost of transportation of the mail, and requiring the land-grant railroads to carry the mail at fifty per cent of the rates paid to the corporations whose roads were built by private capital. Holman maintained that such a policy was just and proper. He thought it was more than liberal, "when the cost in public wealth is considered in the building of the land-grant railroads." He referred to the conditions under which these lands were given to the railroads, namely, that "the said railroad shall be and remain a public highway for the use of the Government of the United States, free from all toll or other charges upon the transportation of any property or troops of the United States," and "shall transport the mails of the United States at such price as Congress shall by law direct." He insisted that "no demands which the Government could make on these corporations for the free transportation of the mails, property, and troops, now and for all time, could compensate this Government and its people for the lands it has granted."<sup>36</sup>

The same situation prevailed when the committee reported



the Naval Appropriation Bill. An attempt was made to increase the appropriation beyond the amount designated in the bill, the argument being used that the safety of the country demanded it. Looking at the real facts in the case and into the cause of the demand for a great navy, Holman found that the insistence did not come from the people, but from "the ingenious and patriotic men who are to be interested and enriched in the expenditure of the millions of money." His speech was again followed by great applause from the Democratic side of the House. He used the same reasoning during the debates on the bill making appropriations for fortifications and other works of defense.<sup>37</sup>

Holman opposed a bill granting a pension to the sole surviving grandchild of Thomas Jefferson. This bill directed the Secretary of the Interior to place the name of Septimia Randolph Meikleham, widow of David S. Meikleham, on the pension roll at the rate of \$5,000 per year. An amendment changed the sum to \$2,500. Holman insisted that such a measure was in absolute defiance and reversal of the doctrines taught by Jefferson himself. He scorned the idea of invoking the name of Jefferson in behalf of a civil-pension list in consideration of rights founded in and resulting from descent and transmission of blood, instead of through personal merit and public service. He said it was sacrilege to appeal to Jefferson's name to support this measure. He feared that the adoption of such a "dangerous and subtle precedent" would "fashion upon the labor of this country a privileged class." The bill was defeated by a vote of over two to one.<sup>38</sup>

For the same reasons that he opposed the appropriation from the national treasury for the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876, Holman protested against such an appropriation for the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition at New Orleans in 1884. He denied the power of Congress, under the just limitations of the Constitution, to appropriate money "to an object and purpose having no relation to Government." He contended that the taxation of the people should be only for the legitimate purposes of government. He showed that if such an appropriation should be made for the New Orleans Exposition, other important cities would soon be demanding the same consideration, and no argument could be urged against it, having

once established a precedent. Such a precedent, he said, could not fail "to be fatal to economy, and baneful and pernicious in the future." The Democratic Party, he continued, should not begin "a policy of expenditure that leaves no limit on the power of Congress." He insisted that this was class legislation, as it promoted and advanced the fortunes and interests of a comparatively small portion of the people at the expense of the labor of them all.<sup>39</sup>

Holman supported his former colleague, William H. English, when charges were brought against him for violating certain laws of the House. These charges claimed that English along with others had violated the privileges of the House in the contested election case of English *vs.* Peelle. Under a House rule, only "ex-members of Congress who are not interested in any claim or directly in any bill pending before Congress" were to be admitted to the Hall of the House or rooms leading thereto. The question was whether or not English had violated this rule in the contest between his son William E. English and Peelle. The committee which investigated the charges found that English did go to see members of the House at their rooms and even entered the House while it was in session where he sought to induce members to vote in favor of his son. But English always moved quietly and did not disturb the business of the House. No evidence was found of the use of corrupt motive for consideration. The committee concluded that the conduct of English was not a breach of the privileges of the House, and therefore recommended that the whole matter be dropped.

Holman spoke in defense of his friend. While he thought that any rule admitting upon the floor of the House other persons than members themselves, together with the necessary officers and employees of the House, and perhaps heads of Departments, was not dictated by wisdom, yet he did not think that English had violated the rule as it stood. He showed that English had consulted Speaker Carlisle, "a gentleman honored by both sides of this House for his moderation, impartiality, and fairness," as to the propriety of his presence on the floor during the pendency of the election contest, and the Speaker had informed him that such procedure was not improper. Therefore, the charges should be dropped. When the vote was taken, it was



decided in the affirmative, by a vote of one hundred thirty-seven to seventy-two, with one hundred fifteen not voting.<sup>40</sup>

So great had become Holman's popularity as a champion of economy and retrenchment that he was mentioned in several quarters as a presidential possibility. Charles A. Dana, editor of the *New York Sun*, was outspoken in his advocacy of Holman for this position. In the fall of 1883, his editorial pages carried several articles suggesting Holman's name for the presidency. The first editorial on the editorial page of the *Sun* on September 17, 1883, was entitled "A MAN FOR THE PEOPLE." Following is the editorial:

That man is WILLIAM STEELE HOLMAN. How truly he has represented the people is shown elsewhere. His ruling passion as a public servant has been honesty and economy. In an era of unsurpassed extravagance and corruption at the fountain-head of the nation he has ever sounded the alarm. He has always stood on the honeycombed levee trying to stop the leaks. Twice has the flood of corruption swept him into private life; but he has reappeared, axe and spade in hand, and resumed his work on behalf of the people. Within twenty years he has saved over \$100,000,000 of the public money.

Frugality has not been the only plank in his platform. He has steadily opposed the centralizing tendencies of the Federal Government. He has always hewn to the line of the Constitution. His axe has never been dull, and his chips have even flown into the faces of both the designing and the corrupt. Neither policy nor personal influence has moved him. A strict advocate of State rights, his fealty to the Union has never been questioned. He has been a persistent opponent of Government subsidies, and has repeatedly endeavored to lop off diplomatic excrescences and wasteful allowances for the army and navy.

In the hey day of Government extravagance, the eyes of the people are turned on HOLMAN. He is the man for the times, and the times demand him, for the Republican party must go.<sup>41</sup>

On the first page of *The Sun* on September 17, 1883, was a long article pointing out Holman's qualifications for the presidency. According to Dana, these elements of public economy were a part of Holman's nature which, "in the daily routine of a score of years in the popular branch of the Federal Legislature," stood out "as peaks pre-eminent." He then raised and answered such questions as:

What has fitted this Western statesman for this substantial work? What

has led him to cultivate drudgery, spurn ease, spend laborious days and nights, and defy present comfort and personal solicitations in this self-imposed task of vigilant activity? From what ancestral blood is this strain of unswerving strength against the vices of this age with their rascality and recklessness? In what school and with what nurture have the bones of this robust virtue been expanded?

Then after giving a vivid and detailed description of Holman's home, ancestry, surroundings, training, and public service, Dana furnished his readers with a verbal photograph of the man. He pictured him as a man above the average size, blonde, with light eyes, and hair almost grey, with straggling whiskers. His forehead was high. His countenance was full of geniality. He was a raw-boned man, with no superfluous flesh. He had nimble ways in walking and talking, and was quite ready to respond socially and humorously in conversation. "A caricature would make his clothes sit upon him in a fashion to suggest the imagery of a protector to a cornfield." His voice was low and pleasant. In conversation and manner he was unfailing in courtesy. Though no great orator, he had peculiar gestures and a rapid delivery. He was always earnest in speech. He aimed at no rhetorical effect, and only occasionally lost his temper. "When spitefully assailed, he has General Jackson's impetuous irascibility, as impertinent audacity has sometimes found out to its cost." He was not slow to find apt words for scathing retort. "As a rule, he is not aggressive on persons or arrogant in debate; but he makes up for this lack by aggressiveness on things which are not good." In discussion, he contended with tenacity, holding on to his own views "with the grip of a vise." He was not moved by precedents and decisions. He was a tribune of the people, a lawmaker, and his own judge. The Constitution was his rule of legislation, and he never ventured away from it, but within it he was aggressively safe.

Dana declared that from his first entrance into public life, Holman had shown that "frugality with accountability is the capital axiom in his system of legislation" and he believed that the "Watch-Dog" would not change:

So it would be if he were Chief Magistrate. It is no marvel to say that he has saved a hundred million dollars to the people by his attention to little details of administration, and his generalizing grasp of the larger



elements of our unity and polity as a nation. He did not become thus useful simply by resisting the allurements of ease, or by unflinching fights against peculation. He had methods for the work he undertook.

A detailed analysis of Holman's services in Congress then followed, showing the methods he used in championing reforms in appropriation bills and bringing about economy in multitudinous details. Dana felt that the employees on the *Congressional Record* even paid an unconscious tribute to Holman by stereotyping the words "Mr. Holman—Mr. Speaker, I object."

The *Sun* also characterized Holman in verse:

Thieves and rascals cannot use him,  
All monopolists abuse him;  
But opposing parties heed him,  
And the people know they need him.

If you want an honest man,  
Better take him when you can. . . .<sup>42</sup>

Not only did many Democrats accept Dana's viewpoint, but many Republicans also believed that Holman's policy of economy should win him the presidential nomination. A letter to Dana from a Republican in Washington in December, 1883, was published in the *Sun*. The author of the letter, "from a long acquaintance" with Holman, "and observance of his course in Congress," heartily endorsed his candidacy. He related the following incident:

Near the close of the Forty-fourth Congress, the Hon. Samuel A. Dobbins, on his way home, heard two persons in front of him on the train rejoicing over the fact "that they had got the old fox this time." Thinking their subject related to a member of Congress, he, after apologizing for interrupting them, inquired who the old fox was, when he was told that it was Judge Holman of Indiana, whose district had been recently [so] changed as to insure his defeat. His reply was: "Gentlemen, I have no sympathy with you in your rejoicing. I have served four years in the House with Judge Holman, and from my Republican standpoint I tell you I would like to see the Congress made up of just such men as W. S. Holman." The effect of Mr. Dobbins' remarks can readily be imagined.<sup>43</sup>

The *Sun* continued to urge the nomination of Holman for the presidency by the next Democratic national convention, as it

had successfully urged the nomination of Horace Greeley in 1872. The theme of the *Sun* seemed to be "Turn the rascals out!" Holman's nomination was urged because he was the best representative of the reform tendency of the country. His name had never been connected with any swindle upon the government treasury. He had never organized or supported any measure that would take money out of the public treasury. He was never guilty of nepotism while in office, and although he had children and relations, he never sought to have them supported at public expense.

For these reasons it was argued that Holman would be exceptionally strong in New York. The *Sun* declared that it was New York and not Indiana, which had to be carried by the Democrats in order to win in 1884. There was a large independent vote in New York, and these independents

wanted a positive man, who stands for something and who has done something. They care little for party preference or party platforms, but everything for the candidates. They voted for Mr. Tilden in 1876, and they wanted the same sort of thing at Washington. They know what Holman has done during these many years in the House of Representatives, and they want him to do the same sort of thing in the White House. He is the kind of man they prefer for President.<sup>44</sup>

One Indiana newspaper had been urging Holman for the governorship again, "because it honestly believed him to be the strongest man that could be named for the place, and just the kind of man we need at the head of our State affairs." But "if it should be decided that he must go up higher, we shall acquiesce, and no man will toss his hat up higher than we over such result. We cordially endorse all that the *Sun* has said."<sup>45</sup>

A correspondent wrote to a newspaper, asking its opinion "in relation to the Democrats nominating next year Hon. William S. Holman and Hon. R. P. Flower or vice-versa, as candidates for President and Vice President."

An interesting article appeared in the New York *Sun* on January 22, 1884. It was copied from the Detroit *Times* of January 19. It was entitled, "A THEATRE MANAGER WHO THINKS THE DEMOCRATS WILL ELECT JUDGE HOLMAN."

According to this Detroit businessman, there was only one



blot on Holman's record—he was economical, and “has saved millions of dollars of the public money from being wasted.”<sup>46</sup> That was the only thing his enemies had yet found against him. “That is the kind of man we feel we want, and not only Democrats want him, but there are scores and scores of Republicans who would vote for such a man as Holman against professional politicians whose records are smirched with jobs and questionable transactions.”

The Lawrenceburg (Ind.) *Register* for October 25, 1883, contained many articles supporting Holman for the presidency. The editorial page of that date condemned its neighbor, the *Press*, of the same city, for refusing to do even justice to Judge Holman. For the two weeks previous, the *Press* had been engaged in copying articles, mostly from Republican newspapers, showing that Holman was objectionable as a candidate for either the governorship or the presidency. The *Register* did not expect the Republican politicians to take off their hats and hurrah for Holman,

but it is certain if Holman is a candidate, either for President, Governor, Senator or Congressman, he will be elected, and receive a large number of Republican votes for any one of the above named offices voted for by the people. . . .

The *Register* declared that Holman was “the people's friend,” and whenever the people had an opportunity to express their appreciation of his worth “it has always been with complete satisfaction. With Holman, therefore, as a candidate for President, the Democracy can be assured of success; it may be doubtful with others. With him, whether it be for Governor or President, it will succeed.”<sup>47</sup> The New York *Star*, however, thought that the Democratic Party would make a mistake in taking a candidate from the West, and believed only a man from New York could win a victory.<sup>48</sup>

At the same time, Holman was again being urged for the governorship. The Washington correspondent of the Cincinnati *News Journal* declared that all others would stand aside for Holman's nomination.<sup>49</sup> The Columbus (Ind.) *Democrat* said that no one was more universally trusted and beloved where known than Holman, and no name would ever be written in

the history of the Democratic Party "which will arouse more honest pride and true affection in the hearts of the masses."<sup>50</sup>

In the Democratic national convention of 1884, however, Holman gave way to the governor of New York, Grover Cleveland, who received 683 of the 820 votes cast. Thomas F. Bayard was given eighty-one and a half votes, and Thomas A. Hendricks secured forty-five and a half. No considerable strength for Holman developed in the convention. His name was not even placed before the delegates, either for the presidency or the vice-presidency. Some thought that he should have been given the nomination for the second place, but the whole interest of the party seemed to center upon the question as to who should head the ticket, with little thought being given to the nomination for the vice-presidency.

A few of the leaders, however, felt that the nomination of an able and popular man for the second place was an essential element to success. Even before the convention met, it was settled that an eastern man would head the ticket, and it would be either Cleveland or Bayard, but it was believed that the running-mate should be a western man who could carry a state whose electoral votes added to New York and the South would be sufficient to elect the ticket. Ohio and Indiana were the two doubtful states whose combined electoral vote was large enough to do this. Indiana was a Democratic state when popular Democrats were before the people. Among the most popular Democrats of the State were Thomas A. Hendricks of Shelby County, Daniel Voorhees of Vigo, and Holman of Dearborn.

Hendricks at first declared that he would not accept the second place. Voorhees wished to remain in the Senate. So Holman was about the only available man, and probably the most popular. His honesty and unassuming manners had made him the idol of the poorer working classes of the people. This was the same group who had elected "Blue Jeans" Williams to the governorship in 1876, and carried the state for Tilden and Hendricks, notwithstanding the lavish use of money by the Republicans. Holman's record was unassailable. His supporters were confident that

With Cleveland and Holman, revenue and civil service reform, and a



determined front, we will trail in the dust the plume of the knight from Maine [Blaine] and relegate to oblivion the black vulture of Illinois [John A. Logan] beneath the righteous condemnation of millions of long-suffering people.<sup>51</sup>

In the convention, however, Hendricks was chosen to make the race with Cleveland,<sup>52</sup> against Blaine and Logan, with the Anti-Monopoly Party and Greenbackers supporting Governor Benjamin F. Butler of Massachusetts.

In Indiana Holman opposed John O. Cravens for a seat in Congress. When the election returns became known it was learned that Holman again had been elected to Congress. The *New York Sun* did not desert Holman entirely and urged Cleveland to appoint him to his Cabinet as Secretary of War, because he was "fitter than all others" for the position. From this it appeared that the "timber" from the fourth Indiana district was "sound" even in the East. It was with no small degree of pride and satisfaction that Holman's constituents

watched the increasing desire among our local Western exchanges even of the Republican press, to see the "Objector" a member of Cleveland's cabinet. It would seem also that the great papers of the Atlantic States have caught the infection and are now urging the claims of Mr. Holman in that direction. We do not know that Mr. Holman is a candidate for the preferment, or would even accept the honor if thrust upon him, but we do know, and have said before, that no man within our knowledge is more eminently fitted for the position than the gentleman in question.<sup>53</sup>

The first session of the forty-ninth Congress convened in December, 1885, with the Democrats in control of the House. Carlisle was again elected Speaker. Vice-President Hendricks had died at his home in Indianapolis two weeks before, on November 25, after a long period of public service. His reputation in public and private life was unsullied. To Holman was assigned the melancholy duty of announcing Hendricks' death to the House, and he requested that Congress set aside a special memorial service for him. The services were held on February 2, 1886. Holman, one of the principal speakers on this occasion, extolled the virtues and services of his late friend.<sup>54</sup>

As was to be expected, from his long experience in such matters, Holman was appointed a member of the Committee on

Appropriations, and also to the Select Committee on American Shipbuilding and Shipowning Interests.<sup>55</sup>

Just before the adjournment of the forty-eighth Congress, Speaker Carlisle announced the appointment of a committee to inquire into and investigate the expenditure of appropriations for Indian schools, agencies, and other Indian affairs, and to inquire into the expenditure of public money and the administration of laws relating to the Yellowstone Park. Holman was made the chairman of the committee, which included, among others Joseph G. Cannon of Illinois.<sup>56</sup> They traveled to the Pacific coast by the northern route and returned through Arizona by way of the southern.

The committee was often exasperated by its chairman, for Holman forced the members to practice a rigid economy on the entire trip. He kept an eye on the expenditures of the disbursing officer who was with them, and would not let them ride in Pullman cars in the daytime, because he said the Pullman was a sleeping car. While he would honor the requisitions for berths at night, the men had to ride in the day coach by day, or pay their own Pullman fares.<sup>57</sup> Holman himself refused to ride in a sleeper at all. He actually sat up all night while his colleagues rode in comfort. He thought that riding in a sleeper was an extravagance. He and his wife, he said, had traveled in an ordinary coach all the way from Indiana to California and back.<sup>58</sup> Whenever the party stopped at a hotel, Holman was very cautious about the expense, even demanding room without bath. Other members of the party objected, however, and insisted that "while studying the Indians we might stick to civilizing customs, just as an object lesson in kindergarten training." They demanded baths. Judge Holman groaned every time he had to approve one of these "extravagant" vouchers.<sup>59</sup>

The party first visited the Sioux agencies in the Dakotas. At Standing Rock Indian Agency, several of the group went hunting soon after their arrival, but not Holman. He preferred to remain at the agency, "puttering around the pantry, smelling the butter, and tasting the tea to test its quality." He was ridiculed for his housewifely care, but he insisted that they had come on this trip "to observe how the Indians lived, whether



they were treated right, or whether they were abused, and that he for one proposed to fulfill his duty conscientiously."

Holman was informed that the steamboat fare from Fort Yates on the return trip to Bismarck was \$3.00 per person. After observing several mules on the reservation, he said, "These mules are idle,—they are earning nothing. They will convey us in the Government ambulance." Cannon vainly protested, but the party rode in this conveyance. It is said that "Uncle Joe" bribed the driver with a two-dollar bill not to avoid a stone in the road and so "give the old man a good shaking up." Before arriving at Fort Lincoln, Holman decided to relieve his cramped limbs by walking. When the stage reached the fort officers were drawn up in full regimentals and the ladies were dressed in their best. Everyone inquired for Holman. Finally he was seen hobbling down the road, tired and dusty. "His trousers were stuffed in his boots, he wore a blue flannel shirt and 'gal-luses.' His beard was full of dust and, altogether, he was a sorry spectacle." The officers decided to fire a salute in his honor, but Cannon shouted, "No, no, for God's sake, don't! He will object to the useless waste of powder." Holman limped into camp as the military band played, "Hail to the Chief." It is related that Cannon, "convulsed with merriment, forgot his dignity altogether, slapped his leg and fairly screamed with delight."<sup>60</sup>

In describing the work of the committee, Holman reported that the trip took three and a half months, during which the party traveled at least thirteen hundred miles in wagons, and they did not spend more than two days at any one Agency. The Indian reservations were so widespread that they were able to visit only the leading ones in each section of the country. They found the condition of the Indians much better than they had expected. Holman remarked: "I set out with the theory that the tribes ought to be concentrated in the Indian Territory and on one or two of the great northern reservations, but I was compelled to modify my theory a good deal." He felt that "where the Indians are making real progress a change of location would hardly be desirable as it would throw them back many years." He praised the work of the various religious denominations in establishing schools and mission stations among the Indians and urged that the government encourage such projects

as much as possible. Concerning the land policy, Holman wrote:

The tribes should be concentrated as far as practicable. They should receive patents for their lands in reasonable quantities as rapidly as their advancement will justify, but the lands should be inalienable for twenty-five years at least. As to ideas of property the Indians are in the main children as yet. The surplus land should be sold from time to time to actual settlers only and the proceeds invested for the benefit of the tribe. There is no use in giving lands to Indians in severalty until they understand the value of property. Even after a reservation is divided among the members of the tribe, the part allotted to the Indians should remain at least for the present a reservation under Government control. In the struggle between an Indian and a white man the Indian uniformly goes under.<sup>61</sup>

As the result of this inspection trip to the Indian reservations Holman gained much knowledge of Indian affairs. He soon became recognized as an authority on such matters. The committee's report resulted in a bill being introduced in Congress in 1886 which provided for the appointment of a commission to inspect and report on the condition of Indians and Indian affairs. This bill proposed to organize a commission composed of men of high standing and large experience who would readjust on a permanent basis the whole Indian question. Three of these men were to be taken from the Army, and three from civil life. Holman favored this bill which was approved by the President, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.<sup>62</sup> The result was the enactment of the Dawes Act in the following year which provided for the allotment to individual Indians of one hundred and sixty acres to each head of a family, and eighty acres to each adult single person. The land was not to be sold for twenty-five years. These homesteads were inalienable, and were to be exempt from taxation. Homesteaders were to be given citizenship status.

The knowledge of Indian affairs which Holman gained on his tour in the summer of 1885 made him well-qualified to speak against a measure which would increase the number of cavalry schools. A bill was before Congress to establish at a cost of \$200,000 on the military reservation at Fort Riley a permanent school of instruction for drill and practice for cavalry and light artillery service of the United States Army. After showing that



he possessed a real knowledge of the Indian situation, Holman declared that it was his belief that the number of forts should be diminished by at least one-half. He saw no necessity for increasing the number of military posts. He was satisfied that there could be a reduction without injury to the service, and this reduction would save about a million dollars a year. As to a cavalry school, Holman thought that such was not needed, as "our soldiers ride very well." "In fact," he added dryly, "they do not have a great deal of riding to do."<sup>63</sup>

In the fifty-first Congress, Holman opposed the bill which would loan arms to certain northwestern states which feared Indian outbreaks. He thought that if the Indians were treated justly there would be no cause of alarm. From his observation of the Indian tribes, he had become convinced that the Indian was more sinned against than sinning. The government had habitually violated treaties with them. They were being despoiled of their lands year after year. He was satisfied that all the tribes desired to live in peace with the white people, and that whenever they did become troublesome or disorderly it was only when they were starving or oppressed by their agents, or when they felt themselves to be the victims of injustice.<sup>64</sup>

Holman also felt that it was an unwise policy to maintain Indian schools in the East and at points remote from the reservations. He saw no benefits resulting from such a policy. He had found that when Indian children returned from these schools, they experienced such a change in their condition as compared with the comforts of civilized life, "that unless they are kept in Government employment, they lapse into a worse condition of barbarism than that of those who have always remained on the reservation." The reservation schools he found to be as admirable as could be found in their class in any part of the country. His sympathies were entirely with the efforts which were being made to educate the Indians. He advocated the appropriation of any reasonable and necessary amount of money out of the public treasury for their education. He was in favor of doing it in such a way as to benefit and improve not only the Indian children who were to be educated, but the whole tribe of Indians as well.<sup>65</sup>

During the first year of President Cleveland's administration,

a bill providing for the appropriations for the various departments of the government was before the House. Holman called the attention of his colleagues to the fact that the measure, although it reduced the appropriations by nearly a million dollars and should be enacted into law, still carried a multitude of items which were much too high. He noted the startling rapidity with which the expenses of the government were being increased year by year. It was his hope that the Committee on Appropriations would in the future thoroughly reduce expenditures in the interest of economy.

He again made a plea for relief to the general taxpayer from oppressive burdens of taxation, which he considered to be "the most powerful agent in centralizing the wealth of a country, in depressing its industries, in depressing its laboring people, and increasing the number of those who are hopelessly impoverished." He feared that this concentration of wealth in the hands of a few tended indirectly to corrupt the government which would eventually fail to exist as a republic.<sup>66</sup>

Holman opposed the policy of the United States government in granting subsidies to steamship companies for carrying mail. He said such a practice enriched vested interests and, at the same time, worked a hardship on the general taxpayer. "Subsidy in the nature of things centralizes wealth," he declared. Subsidy was not a compensation according to service rendered. He believed that such a measure was un-American and had no place in a Democratic administration.<sup>67</sup>

During Cleveland's first year in the White House much concern was felt over the rapid depletion of public lands. Most of the good agricultural land had already come under private ownership, and a good deal of the land that was still held by the government was almost worthless. The various land laws had not been respected. Homesteaders protested in vain. The commissioner of the general land office attempted to check the abuses, and Congress was asked to appropriate \$90,000 to investigate the alleged fraudulent entries of the public lands.

Holman favored increasing the appropriation to \$150,000. He admitted that "it is not often that I submit a motion to increase the amount of an appropriation." But he was convinced that the public lands "which ought to be held as the sacred heritage



of our people for homes and freeholds" were rapidly passing beyond the control of the government "and being appropriated by speculators, and in securing large landed estates to unscrupulous men, defeating the end of securing homes for our landless people."

The Secretary of the Interior, in his annual report for 1884, had complained that large amounts of land had been acquired under fictitious names. Speculators thus gained control of the lands which they held for a higher price. Railroads had been allowed to keep the lands granted to them for speculative purposes. Even titled Englishmen and English land companies had secured enormous tracts of the public domain. Much of it had been exploited. There was no doubt that extensive frauds had been committed in the entry of land in the West, and it was Holman's hope that Congress would aid the commissioner of the general land office in ferreting out the frauds.<sup>68</sup>

In the fiftieth Congress, Holman had been instructed by the Committee on Public Lands, of which he was the chairman, to report back to the House a bill designed to secure to actual settlers the public lands adapted to agriculture and to protect forests of the public domain.<sup>69</sup> He asked that a sufficient appropriation be made for an investigation of any frauds alleged to have been committed in this matter. He declared that the public interest had become aroused on this subject and that the people were demanding that every acre available should be secured for homes. He said further that not one acre of land should be appropriated for monopolies or speculation through fraudulent means.<sup>70</sup>

Holman then offered an amendment which stipulated that all lands thereafter sold, should have all coal deposits reserved by the government.

He stipulated further that:

purchaser and heirs might take coal until such time as Congress shall in its discretion determine that the public good requires further legislation in relation thereto, and shall by general laws take the control of any such coal deposits for the purpose only of protecting the same from monopoly and secure the product thereof at reasonable prices to the people; and such reservation shall be expressed in all patents issued for land hereafter disposed of under the provisions of this act.<sup>71</sup>

In the same session, Holman championed a measure for the forfeiture of the railroad land grants which were not used by the railroads for construction purposes. He later appealed to Congress to grant these forfeited lands as pensions to the Union soldiers and their heirs.<sup>72</sup>

Another question which agitated the country during Cleveland's first administration was that of the surplus in the treasury. This had been built up after the Civil War as the result of the system of internal revenue taxes and the high protective tariff. Many serious efforts had been made to dispose of this surplus, because it withdrew from circulation a large part of the liquid capital of the country. Holman sincerely felt that any surplus beyond \$100,000,000 ought to be applied toward reducing the debt, although he believed that even \$100,000,000 was too large a sum, "drawn from the labor of our people," to be locked up in the public treasury. He insisted that a great treasury, or indeed any surplus, was "a public misfortune, a calamity," and if it were not applied to the public debt, it would be applied to the "advancement of the countless schemes of public plunder and public robbery which the inventive schemes of the ever-aggressive lobby" would bring forward.<sup>73</sup>

Probably the most important single measure of Cleveland's first administration was the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887. The extraordinary capacity of the railroads to unite into general and consolidated systems was not seen before the Civil War, and no effort was made in Congress until 1864 to impose any limitations on the aggressive methods and extortionate demands of the railroad corporations. Early attempts to restrict the charges of the companies failed, for even then it appeared, from the action of Congress, that only a strong and well-defined public opinion could secure legislation which would impose restrictions on corporations possessed of the extraordinary advantages incident to the railroad system.

The first systematic effort to regulate railroad commerce "among the states" was in 1874, when it was established that Congress had such power, although the states still had the power to regulate local transportation within their limits. Holman insisted that the right to regulate and control these railroad corporations was "absolutely necessary for the public safety," and



that the extortionate demands of the railroad corporations on the labor of the country were a leading cause of the discouraging condition in the national affairs.<sup>74</sup>

Considering the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887 as a whole, Holman gave it his cordial support, yet it was clear to him that it would require years to perfect the measure. However, he looked upon it as a good beginning, and he hoped that in a few years, by the united action of the federal and state governments, the gigantic system of railroad corporations would be brought within the proper control of law. He congratulated the House that after

many years of contest, one system at least of corporate franchises and overbearing monopoly, which has hitherto employed its combined powers in the amassing of imperial private fortunes by extortion, oppression, and injustice, will be placed under the restrictions of imperative law.<sup>75</sup>

The fiftieth Congress, which convened in its first session in December, 1887, again found Holman one of its members. Speaker Carlisle appointed him chairman of the committee on Public Lands, a position for which he was well qualified. The fact that Carlisle had induced him to leave the Committee on Appropriations and go on that of Public Lands, furnished Republican newspapers with a good opportunity to "pitch into him" in a small way.<sup>76</sup> He was also made a member of the Committee on the Eleventh Census.<sup>77</sup>

As usual, Holman attacked various appropriation bills. He called the attention of the Democratic majority to the economy obligations which they assumed in the elections. He again referred to the great surplus in the treasury as "demoralizing" to Congress which was being besieged on every hand by the powerful lobbyists. Especially was this true in regard to the appropriations for the enlargement of the military forces. Such demands were being made in the name of patriotism, but Holman said he saw no good reason for such an increase, beyond the matter of sentiment and excessive precaution.<sup>78</sup> At the same time, however, he presented a resolution of the Board of Trade of Indianapolis, asking for the erection of a monument to the late William Henry Harrison. It was referred to the Committee on the Library. He later proposed that a sum of \$25,000 be ap-

propriated from the national treasury for a monument to be erected at North Bend, Ohio, in memory of Harrison. The bill, however, was later withdrawn from consideration. He also presented a petition from several citizens of Indiana, asking for a soldiers' home near Indianapolis. This was referred to the Committee on Military Affairs.<sup>79</sup>

Holman's advocacy of such items of expenditure for his own state called for some sarcastic remarks from Thomas B. Reed. Holman had induced one of his fellow-members to favor a bill after which Holman himself arose and cautiously said that he had studied the matter carefully and believed it was a meritorious proposition and should be passed. When the Speaker put the question to a vote, about three hundred members shouted the most uproarious "NO!" ever heard in the House. Reed then jumped to his feet and shouted "Mr. Speaker," and then, in gently sentimental tones, he recited Byron's familiar lines:

'Tis sweet to hear the watchdog's honest bark  
Bay deep-mouthed welcome as we draw near home!

It is related that the "Great Objector" forgot to object any more that day.<sup>80</sup>

Another incident is told of the time when the consideration of sundry bills for the erection of post-office buildings in a number of districts had "gone over" by reason of Holman's objection, and the members having the bills in charge joined forces, lumped the several measures into an omnibus bill and duly presented it. The members especially interested in its passage, "to make assurance doubly sure," had quietly inserted a provision for the erection of a government building in one of the cities of Holman's district. When the bill was read, Holman seemed to be uninterested, but all eyes were upon him as he continued to write at his desk. No objection came from "The Great Objector," and the bill came up for final passage. A member from Missouri then rushed to the front and exclaimed: "Mr. Speaker, I desire to call the attention of the gentleman from the fourth district of Indiana to the fact that the Treasury is being robbed!" Holman, unmoved by this appeal, continued to write and chew his tobacco. A moment of suspense followed, after which, amid applause in which even the galleries took part, the Wisconsin



member exclaimed in tragic tones: "Ah, Mr. Speaker, our watchdog of the Treasury, like all good watch-dogs, *never barks when his friends are around!*"<sup>81</sup>

The subject of opening up certain portions of the Indian Territory for settlement had been exciting interest for several years. Holman had hoped, with many others, that this territory should be forever dedicated and set apart as the home of the Indian where the remnants of the once-powerful tribes might eventually form one of the states of the American Union. But this policy had long since been abandoned. It was then hoped, that in all fairness and justice, at least a portion of that territory might be set aside for the Indians, and the balance opened to the settlement of the white people. This latter proposition was favored by Holman.

He did not believe that the measure which would organize the Oklahoma Territory was a homestead measure. If it were dedicated to the single purpose of securing homes for the landless people, then the region would be settled by landless men from all sections of the Union, who with scanty means would hurry forward with their families "to secure that priceless blessing, an independent home." On the other hand, if the land were opened up at \$1.25 an acre and a nominal residence of three years, "it would be taken up at once by the enterprising population of the States around it, and the actual number of your independent free-holds will not be increased. Instead of landless citizens, men of landed estates and homes will at once enter these lands for speculation." In the name of labor, Holman demanded that this last great body of arable land should be secured to the landless and laboring people.<sup>82</sup>

Two months before the passage of the bill which organized Oklahoma Territory, Holman introduced an amendment, which was adopted by the House, but was later rejected by the Senate. This declared that no Indian lands in the territory should be used for the benefit of any railroad corporation.<sup>83</sup> The former Indian Territory was finally opened to settlement on April 22, 1889, and there was a mad scramble to enter the territory and stake out claims.

The following year, a bill before Congress provided a temporary government for the Territory of Oklahoma. The mea-

sure was opposed by Holman because it carried with it a commutation clause which would work to the benefit of the speculator. He asked for the maintainance of the original homestead policy. Under the pending bill, he charged, the capitalists would place men on the land for the required year and a half. It would be criminal, he said, if an acre of the comparatively small body of public land still remaining should be permitted to go into the hands of speculators, instead of becoming the homes of the laboring poor.<sup>84</sup>

In December, 1887, President Cleveland devoted his annual message to Congress entirely to tariff revision. He was worried by the surplus in the treasury. As a consequence, the Mills bill was introduced in the Democratic House the following year, and it was passed by a straight party vote. It sought to reduce duties on various items and placed others on the free list. The Senate, however, rejected it, and substituted a high protective measure which the House refused to accept. Holman believed that the general income was too great. One way to reduce the surplus would be to reduce the internal taxes and lower the duties on imports.

Holman was not in favor of free trade. He believed that the government should depend mainly on the tariff for support, but that the duties on imports should be reduced. He thought that the wages of the average working man in America were already too low, even compared with the wages of the European worker. The result was, he said, that there was a great concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, and this tended to bring about "the carnival of luxury and extravagance." He discussed in great detail the various items in the tariff bill, such as raw material, lumber, and the products of agriculture, and he showed that in every instance the duties were levied for the benefit of certain vested interests at the expense of the majority of the people. He again declared that if the American people intended to maintain the supremacy of their free institutions, "they must at least see to it that by compelling moderate taxation and reasonable expenditure their Government remains honest and frugal."<sup>85</sup>

There was much agitation, during this period, in favor of the building of a canal under American auspices through Nicaragua. A bill to incorporate the Maritime Canal Company of Nicaragua



was under discussion in the House on December 7, 1888. The incorporators were to be in part citizens of the United States, and in part citizens of other countries. The capital stock of the corporation was fixed at \$100,000,000. Holman believed that such a project would involve the United States in foreign difficulties. He thought the move was a departure from the traditional policy of the United States. It was probable, he said, that this policy would eventually compel the United States to occupy with land and naval forces the country through which the proposed canal would run. He denied that Congress had the power to grant such an incorporation. He then submitted a resolution to the effect that the United States government should be relieved of all responsibility under this transaction. The bill, with Holman's amendment, was then adopted.<sup>86</sup>

Holman was elected to the fifty-first Congress, which met in December, 1889. The Republicans were once more in control of both Houses, but their majority in the lower branch was only seven. Thomas B. Reed, the new Speaker, appointed Holman to the Committee on Public Lands again and also to the Select Committee on the Eleventh Census.<sup>87</sup>

In the first session of this Congress, three of the leaders of the House, Samuel J. Randall, William D. ("Pig-Iron") Kelley, and Samuel S. Cox, died. Holman had been intimately associated with these men through his long congressional career. Their deaths were a real blow to him. During the memorial services for them, he was one of the men who spoke in praise of their public services and private lives. He was one of a committee of four from the House, along with Carlisle, Cannon and William McKinley, appointed to attend the funeral of Randall.<sup>88</sup>

As a member of the Committee on Public Lands, Holman opposed a bill which would allow foreigners to acquire title to certain mineral lands. The House had passed an act on March 3, 1887, restricting the ownership of land in the territories to American citizens. Before the passage of the law, foreign capitalists had become the owners of millions of acres of the public lands at a nominal price. Now it was proposed to repeal that law so as to permit aliens to acquire and hold lands in the territories of the United States which passed under the description of mineral lands, excepting coal and iron lands. Ever since the law of 1887

had been enacted, parties representing foreign syndicates had been working to secure the proposed modification of the law to enable them to purchase and hold mineral lands.

Holman could not see any reason why the law should be modified in the interests of foreign investors. He said the wealth of the country already was being drawn annually in the form of dividends and interest from the United States to foreign countries. No matter what their character might be, the public lands should not be the subject of monopoly in the hands of foreigners, because such a situation, he maintained, would ultimately curse the country.<sup>89</sup>

Because of their slender majority in the House, the Republicans realized that their control was rather precarious. A powerful Democratic minority could easily block any Republican legislation under the existing rules. Speaker Thomas B. Reed set out to curb the obstructive power of the minority. Consequently, in order to make the majority more effective and secure, the Rules Committee presented a series of recommendations designed to expedite business. The new rules provided that the chair should entertain no motions whose purpose would be to block legislation. Another rule allowed the chair to count members who were present but refused to vote, when determining whether a quorum was present. The new rules also systematized procedure and facilitated the passage of legislation.

Reed was attacked by the Democrats as a "Czar," and they attempted to prevent the passage of the rules, but failed. Holman denounced this "petty oligarchy," with the Speaker at its head. He defended the rights of minorities in legislative halls. He declared that the new rules "will leave the public Treasury absolutely without protection so far as this House is concerned, which is made by the Constitution its special guardian. They manacle the watchman and arm the lobby with crow-bars!"

These new rules, Holman predicted, would mean that the Speaker, instead of being the servant of the House, would be its master; the Speaker and chairman of committees would be absolute rulers of the business of the House. It would mean an enlargement of the revenues to meet the increased expenditures. It would mean "a splendid government and an impoverished people."<sup>90</sup>



It was not long before the efficacy of the new rules in expediting legislation was demonstrated. During the next few months, numerous bills were rushed through the House, and Holman's fears were substantiated. One of these extreme party measures was the Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890, by which 4,500,000 ounces of silver bullion were to be purchased each month. The bill called for the issuance of Treasury Certificates which were to be full legal tender. No Republicans voted against the bill, and no Democrats voted in favor of it. As a matter of fact, a Republican compromise had been effected. There were many eastern Republicans who were against the bill, but they had to vote for it to get western Republican votes for the McKinley tariff. Holman himself believed in the free and unlimited coinage of silver, placing it on a par with gold, as a measure best for the whole people.<sup>91</sup>

Another measure which was carried through the House as a result of the new rules was Henry Cabot Lodge's federal election law which was intended to insure federal control at polling places. This was really designed to prevent southern suppression of the negro vote. Democrats fought the bill "inch by inch,"<sup>92</sup> and denounced the plan as a "force act." It finally met defeat in the Senate as Holman had predicted.<sup>93</sup> He believed that despotic government could hardly go further than did this bill in "investing irresponsible power in a satrap." To him, it was "the most outspoken expression of 'Federalism,' of distrust of the people to carry on their own government, that has appeared in Congress since the 'alien and sedition laws' were enacted."<sup>94</sup>

It was in this Congress that a bill was introduced providing for an appropriation from the national treasury to aid in the Columbian International Exposition at Chicago in 1892. But Holman was again on the alert and protested against it as an extravagant expenditure which "has brought discredit on the frugal and honest methods of our Government." To Holman this extravagant procedure, was "scandalous," and instead of displaying the greatness of the country and the value of its institutions, "it is bringing reproach and dishonor upon our republican form of Government, where patriotic motives, and not venal and mercenary methods, are supposed to control citizens in public affairs."<sup>95</sup>

According to Holman, the question was not whether the Fair should be embarrassed in any way by want of sufficient means. The question was whether the money should be raised by the great Illinois corporation which Congress had recognized to carry on the Fair, by the voluntary contributions of money by the city of Chicago and its wealthy citizens, or whether the \$5,511,000 should be imposed upon the laboring people of the country, "but few of whom will be able to witness the great display."<sup>96</sup>

Holman later presented several petitions from various citizens and groups in Indiana and other states, begging Congress to withhold any further grant of money except on condition that the gates of the fair be closed on Sunday and all intoxicating liquors be excluded from the grounds.<sup>97</sup> He presented other petitions, however, in which the petitioners called for exactly the opposite legislation.<sup>98</sup>

Holman's progressivism was seen in his advocacy of an amendment to the Constitution which provided for the election of Senators by the people. He introduced into Congress a joint resolution of the General Assembly of Indiana, instructing the Senators and requesting the representatives from that state in the Congress of the United States to use their influence to secure the adoption of that amendment. The resolution was referred to the Judiciary Committee where it remained indefinitely.<sup>99</sup>

As a result of the Eleventh Census of 1890, an attempt was made to increase the number of members of the House from three hundred thirty-two to three hundred fifty-six. But Holman voiced his disapproval of any increase in the number of Representatives. He believed that even the present membership was too large for safe, prudent, and intelligent legislation. To secure such legislation, he insisted that each member must have an opportunity "to understand fully what is transpiring." This could not be done even with the smaller number. Many members were too remote from the clerk's desk even to hear in the midst of the confusion incident to a large assembly the reading of the lists on which they were called. He did not hope that there would be any reduction from the present number. That would require a very strong sentiment of reform in Congress to effect and demand a large amount of self-denial on the part of the



statesmen of the various states. He declared, however, that such a reduction some time or other was inevitable.

The evils of an excessive number of representatives in the House were already manifest. In the first place, Holman claimed, it diminished the personal responsibility of members. In many cases, the number not voting on important items actually exceeded the number voting against or for the proposition. The result was that power became vested in a few great committees and in the Speaker of the House. Then, too, more and more power would be delegated by the state legislatures to the national government, and the dignity and importance of the state legislatures would be lessened in proportion. Such a situation was not desirable. The lines of demarcation between federal and state powers were gradually being destroyed. In spite of Holman's objections, the bill passed.<sup>100</sup>

At the close of the fifty-first Congress, Holman wrote to his friend William H. O'Brien: "Well, the Fifty-first Congress is ended, and I am sincerely glad of it. It was the most disagreeable Congress in all respects I have even known. The Democrats took their revenge on Reed in the most effective way."<sup>101</sup>

The fifty-second Congress, which met in December, 1891, was dominated by the Democrats. Holman, who had been mentioned for the Speakership, nominated Charles F. Crisp of Georgia, for the position. Thomas B. Reed of Maine was also nominated, but received only eighty-three votes to Crisp's two hundred twenty-eight on the first ballot.<sup>102</sup> The fight for Speaker was long and bitter in the Democratic caucus. Other candidates for the nomination, besides Crisp and Holman, were Roger Q. Mills of Texas, Benton McMillan of Tennessee, William M. Springer of Illinois, and Col. William Hatch of Missouri.<sup>103</sup> Holman was appointed chairman of the very important Committee on Appropriations.<sup>104</sup> In fact, all the strategic positions in the House, except Speaker, were given to the North, including the chairmanships of all committees having any political significance. Crisp seemed exceedingly anxious to carry out the wishes of the Northern Democrats, and Holman felt satisfied that "as soon as he is able to assist in making up the rules and they are adopted the House will begin to make a satisfactory record."<sup>105</sup>

As chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Holman fa-

vored the bill for the construction, repair and preservation of certain public works on rivers and harbors. Such improvements, he declared, were of public concern, affecting the general commerce of the country, and he thought a reasonable sum of money ought to be annually appropriated for that purpose. All other bills contained a material reduction in their appropriation, not to the extent which Holman had hoped for by any means, but nevertheless a moderate reduction. Earnest efforts had been made for retrenchment except in the case of the rivers and harbors bill which involved a largely increased expenditure.

Holman represented, it should be remembered, a district lying along the Ohio River, naturally interested in the matter of river improvements. His constituents were much concerned with the navigation of the Ohio and the lower Mississippi rivers. He had already gone on record as favoring an appropriation of \$400,000 for the improvement of the falls of the Ohio River and the Louisville Canal.<sup>106</sup> He did not favor the construction of the Hennepin Canal connecting Lake Michigan and the Illinois, Mississippi and Rock rivers.<sup>107</sup>

In 1890, when the River and Harbor Committee was deliberating on the matter of appropriations, Holman wrote confidentially to his friend O'Brien of Lawrenceburg, Indiana, to the effect that the committee was favorable to an appropriation of \$40,000 for certain improvements of the Ohio River at that place.<sup>108</sup>

The methods of making contracts aroused more opposition from Holman than the amount of appropriations requested. He referred to the situation in his own district where thousands of acres of land were annually flooded. He objected to the government policy of entering into great enterprises or constructing levees simply for the purpose of preventing the overflow of lands or for reclaiming lands from the floods. He steadily maintained that Congress could appropriate money for the improvement of the navigation of rivers, and build levees if necessary to aid in navigation, but not solely to protect lands. If, however, the improvement of navigation incidentally relieved the adjacent lands from overflow, that would be a benefit which he would be glad to see result. He referred to the city of Lawrenceburg which excited the sympathy of the American people in 1883



and 1884 when the city was overwhelmed by tremendous floods. There was scarcely a town or city in the United States that did not come forward promptly to Lawrenceburg's relief.

Holman did not see how the American people could expect to have any economy in their government under the contract system. To him this meant that the government should enter on a great scheme of internal improvements, not on a "pay-as-you-go" plan, but under the system of credit. It would mean a mortgage on the future, and Congress would have no control over the work after the contracts were made and the work entered upon as entire control would be placed under the Secretary of War. Such a system, he claimed, would lead to increased taxation, rather than to reduction. The bill, however, passed the House by a vote of one hundred sixty-one to eighty-three, with eighty-four not voting.<sup>109</sup> Holman reminded his Democratic colleagues, especially the younger members, that he stood for frugal, plain, honest government.<sup>110</sup>

Holman had made such a careful scrutiny of the appropriation bills as they came before his committee that a reduction of \$33,529,291.98 had actually been made. This would have amounted to over \$54,000,000 had it not been for the rivers and harbors bill which totaled more than \$21,000,000.<sup>111</sup> On the last day of the fifty-second Congress, he could truthfully say:

While a Democratic Congress would not reduce the pension roll except to reform the method of administration so as to make that roll in fact "a roll of honor," most of the other measures of the Fifty-first Congress which have enormously increased the expenses of the Government, especially as to bounties and subsidies to enrich special interests and increase the wealth of citizens already rich, would have been repealed if the Democrats now controlled both Houses of Congress as they will in the Fifty-third Congress.<sup>112</sup>

During the fifty-second Congress, in the session of 1891-92, Holman was asked to contribute an article on public expenditures to the *North American Review*. He was reluctant to write the requested article. His health was poor and he felt that he should devote all the time he could to his public duties. Three days before the *Review* went to press, however, he agreed to do it. He had only three nights to work, for his days were necessarily employed in committee work. He had no opportunity to

revise the article or to correct the proof. But in spite of this pressure, the article was well-received by the Democratic press, although Holman himself was "thoroughly disgusted with its incompleteness."<sup>113</sup>

In the article, Holman observed the enormous growth of public expenditures and illustrated how rapidly the government was drifting away from the policy of its founders, which was, he claimed, "to establish a plain, frugal government that should treat its people with equal-handed fairness, opening up to all alike an equal chance in the struggle for life by protecting all, granting favors to none." He showed how favoritism in legislation had tended to result in overgrown estates, favored classes, and impoverished multitudes, instead of contributing to the equality, happiness, and prosperity of the whole people. He declared: "If the Congress of the United States sets the example of extravagance, the purity and integrity of the whole system are endangered." He charged that excessive taxation was always inexcusable and unjust.<sup>114</sup>

During the summer of 1892, in the midst of the presidential campaign, occurred the very serious strike at the plant of the Carnegie Steel Company at Homestead, Pennsylvania. The men demanded a restoration of wage reductions and the recognition by the company of their labor union. The company employed armed Pinkerton detectives to protect its buildings. The result was the loss of life and destruction of property. The House Judiciary Committee had been directed by a resolution of the House to investigate the nature and character of employment of the Pinkerton men by corporations engaged in interstate commerce as well as to determine into the cause and conditions of the sanguinary conflict.

Holman defended neither the company in its use of the detectives nor the workers in their demands. He held Congress largely responsible for the difficulty. He believed that the whole tendency of the government during most of the time since the Civil War had been to foster the growth of gigantic business enterprises and "overgrown estates" through various forms of aids and subsidies, and that these corporations had now reached a point where they were considering themselves responsible to no one, not even to Congress itself. "In the very insolence of



power," he said, the companies had organized armed forces "to overawe all opposition to their will . . . crushing the men who without violence or bloodshed oppose their will."<sup>115</sup>

Just before the end of the administration of President Benjamin Harrison, the Washington correspondent of the *Los Angeles Times* had an interview with Holman when Harrison's future plans were discussed. Holman said that he did not know what the President would do after leaving the White House, but he added: "I suppose he will go back to Indianapolis to live. He has, you know, a good house there, and he is a rich man." When asked how much he thought Harrison was worth, he replied that he did not know exactly, but because of his law practice and his salary as President, he should have saved about \$150,000, and he should therefore be worth about \$200,000. The President had always been a frugal man and had never wasted money in foolish extravagance nor on his campaigns.<sup>116</sup>

Holman was asked also if he thought Cleveland would make many changes in the offices of the government. His reply was that he didn't think so, but he thought he would increase the list of men in the civil service. Another question related to retrenchment prospects during the next four years. Holman's answer was to the effect that the government had become a spendthrift, and the people had grown very extravagant. "Our Federal taxes must be cut down," he said, "in order to maintain republican institutions." Wealth had been piling up in the hands of the few, he observed, while the large majority of the American people were growing poorer.<sup>117</sup>

It appears from these remarks that Holman was unable to keep pace with the changing economic set-up. He had begun his services in Congress when the country was still largely agrarian and when simplicity and frugality were the dominating factors in economic life. In the thirty or more years since that time, however, new forces had begun to influence legislation, and the United States had become a highly industrialized country, with big business playing the leading role. In spite of Holman's continued insistence on economy and lower taxes, the majority of the American people had come to the conclusion that what was needed was more equitable taxation. Cutting down the taxes would not necessarily aid the common people. As a matter of

fact, the wealthy classes are usually the strong supporters of lowered taxation, while the poorer classes usually demand an increase in taxation for those in the higher economic brackets. Evidently, Holman failed to appreciate these factors. He continued to be the champion of economy and lower taxes. For the rest of his public career he fought in vain to stem the tide of the new economic order.

In the fifty-third Congress, which met in special session in August, 1893, the Democrats were again in control of both Houses. Crisp was again elected Speaker. Congress had been called in special session by President Cleveland because of the panic of that year, and the first remedy that he suggested in the crisis was the repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act. This was finally accomplished. Holman himself took little active part in this session. A leave of absence had been granted to him in September for an indefinite period because of sickness in his family.<sup>118</sup> About the only thing that he did during the entire session was to present numerous minor bills, petitions, and joint resolutions. Holman's voice seldom was heard in Congress from this time until his death. He was absent from the House much of the time, either because of his own sickness or because of the illness of his wife. Consequently he did not take an active interest in the deliberations of the House.

Just before the third and last session of the fifty-third Congress closed, however, Holman made one last plea for economy in public expenditures. He voiced his protest against the increase of the public debt and taxation. The House was in Committee of the Whole on the State of the Union, and was considering a bill authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to issue bonds to maintain a sufficient gold reserve and to redeem and retire the United States notes. Holman opposed both features of this bill. He insisted that while eastern sections of the country—the financial areas—favored the bill, yet to the great mass of people, especially the debtor class everywhere, the bill, if it became law, would mean “poverty and desolate homes and cheerless firesides, for its object is to reduce the volume of money and thus increase the wealth of the few, and that cannot be done without reducing multitudes of homes to poverty and wretchedness.”<sup>119</sup> The “Watch-Dog” was more than a guardian of the federal treasury;



he was a champion of the many against the few in the period of transition. He sensed the dangers, although he did not understand very well the forces that were at work transforming the economic situation.

By 1894, the nation, particularly the West and South, was feeling the effects of the rising tide of revolt which came to be known as Populism. It was a revolt against the industrial masters of the nation, and it represented a new stand of the country's agricultural interests. Among other things demanded by this new group were: (1) a national currency, safe, sound and flexible, issued by the general government only, a full legal tender for all debts, without the use of banking corporations; (2) the free and unlimited coinage of silver and gold at the legal ratio of sixteen to one; (3) a graduated income tax; (4) all state and national revenues limited to the necessary expenses of the government economically and honestly administered; (5) no monopoly of land for speculative purposes, and all land held by railroads and other corporations in excess of their actual needs, and all lands owned by aliens, to be reclaimed by the government and held for actual settlers only.

While Holman supported practically every one of the principles of the Populists, he remained steadfastly loyal to the Democratic Party, and refused to change his political stripe. It is rather difficult to account for his unwillingness to do so, although on at least one other occasion, when it was somewhat unpopular to be a Democrat in the North, he stood firm in his political allegiance. Perhaps the most plausible explanation for his attitude, however, is to be found in the fact that Holman was by this time well-advanced in years, and he knew that the day of intense political battling was over for him. He was reluctant to become actively identified with a new group.

Holman's political career suffered a serious blow in the election of 1894. There had been for some time an undercurrent of antagonism against him by members of his own party, but now it broke out in open opposition. Democratic and Populist anti-Holman clubs were formed throughout the district. During the spring and summer these clubs were busy attacking the veteran Congressman. There was a great deal of discontent in the district, and there was a feeling too among many leading Democrats,

whether expressed openly or not, that it was time for Holman to retire voluntarily so that a younger and more active man could have a chance.

The Cincinnati *Enquirer* on July 29, 1894, carried on its front page a lengthy article which was copied in several of the anti-Holman papers of Indiana. The article declared that a man who was well-known throughout the state politically as a Democrat and who was a resident of Holman's district, had recently made a tour of the district on business matters, and was surprised at the strength of the opposition which was manifesting itself in a number of ways. Possibly this opposition was partly due to the inactivity of Holman during 1893-94. The observer reported the activities of the anti-Holman groups which had been formed in the various counties. It was apparent that there was a disposition to defeat Holman in the Democratic district convention. It was openly charged that Holman's days of usefulness both upon the floor and in congressional committees had passed. It was also claimed that Holman had used his influence to reinstate Republicans in office, and that he had given offices in various parts of the district to Republicans. It was asserted that he had already drawn more salary from the treasury of the United States than any other public man in the country.

It was to be expected, of course, that the Republicans would oppose him if he were nominated again, but the opposition of many leaders of the Democratic Party to Holman's re-nomination was noticeable. It was claimed that in previous elections, he had pledged himself that if he were given one more term, he would get out of the way and give a younger man a chance. His Democratic opponents also talked bitterly in effect that physically, mentally and politically he was incapacitated from that active service demanded by the district, and that a younger and more vigorous Democrat was needed. It was also said that Holman could not possibly be of any further service to the district because his objecting and obstructing tactics had made him so thoroughly disliked by other members of Congress that it would be impossible for him to get through any measure calculated to benefit his constituents. Another criticism was that, although he had been in Congress for thirty years, yet his friends could not



point to a single prominent bill of which he was the author that had become law.

The *Enquirer* went further, saying that it was a settled fact that if Holman were again placed on the ticket, he would be beaten at the polls, and that although the district was usually Democratic by over two thousand majority, this would be an especially bad year for "chronic fossils." This fear of Republican victory was well-founded, as the tide was running strongly against Democrats because of the "Cleveland Panic." It was claimed that there were nearly two thousand Democrats in the district who would positively refuse to vote for Holman. The article concluded with the statement that his nomination would mean a Republican Congressman from the district.<sup>120</sup>

A handbill, bearing the heading "Headquarters Anti-Holman Democratic Committee," dated Lawrenceburg, Indiana, August 4, 1894, and addressed "To the Delegates and Voters of the Fourth Congressional District," gave what purported to be a list of no less than forty-eight "good reasons why the old fossil ought to be sent to the rear," and claimed that "one hundred more could be given." The Democrats opposed to Holman challenged anyone to give a single good reason why he "should longer be fed at the public crib."<sup>121</sup>

In spite of this Democratic opposition, Holman was again nominated to represent his district in Congress, his Republican opponent being James E. Watson, "a greenhorn," as he called himself.<sup>122</sup> In the fall elections, all the Republican candidates for Congress in Indiana were successful. Watson's plurality over Holman was only four hundred thirty-four, however, which was the smallest plurality of any of the thirteen successful Republicans.<sup>123</sup> This seems to indicate that either the Democratic faction that opposed Holman was very weak, or Watson's popularity was not very great. In view of the hard times following the panic of 1893, Watson's strength certainly should have been much greater. The slight defeat of Holman really vindicated him against opponents in his own party and against the Cincinnati *Enquirer*.

Watson dated his victory over his opponent to a drowsy summer Sunday afternoon in Winchester, Indiana, twenty years before his successful campaign. He was then "one of a lot of bare-

foot boys off the same piece as Riley's old swimmin' hole gang." On this particular day, he started out for the river after dinner and met a schoolmate named Henry Keller. Watson had attended the Methodist Sunday School in the morning, but Keller's invitation to him to attend the German Sunday School that afternoon appealed to his curiosity. There he met "Uncle Charley" Kayser, who asked him how he would like to learn German, and he agreed to teach him if he got together eight or ten boys. As a consequence, Watson became so interested in the language that for nearly two years he practically lived with the Keller family, going home only occasionally. He claims that he defeated Holman in 1894 by "going about and making speeches in that German district *in German*."<sup>124</sup>

Watson made speeches in every township in his district, a total of eighty-four long and twenty-four short speeches, though in order to do this he had to travel nearly 3000 miles in a buggy, and the same distance by rail. During his canvass he spoke in seven places where a Republican speech had never been heard before.<sup>125</sup> He evidently used some of the same tactics which Holman himself had used on many occasions when he popularized himself with the masses during political campaigns.

The story is told of a big Democratic rally which was held in Holman's district to which the veteran Congressman was invited. A band and a great crowd of people were at the railroad station to meet "Uncle Bill." A committee on arrangements and an elegant carriage trimmed in flags and bunting and drawn by four beautiful blacks awaited him. As Holman stepped from the train, the first person to reach his side was a farmer's wife, wearing an unstylish bonnet and plain calico, but there was the same familiar greeting, "Well, how-do-you-do, Aunt Jane! Where's Hiram?" While she was explaining that her husband could not come to town until after dinner, the band was playing, the crowd cheering, and the members of the reception committee were becoming nervous. Finally, the chairman begged Holman to get into the carriage, but the Congressman insisted on the woman taking his place, and he escorted her to the gaily-bedecked vehicle. Amid the applause of the thousands, "Uncle Bill" locked arms with a plainly clothed farmer and, followed by the well-dressed reception committee, walked to the fairgrounds.<sup>126</sup>



Judge Holman was the only man defeated in 1894 for whom Champ Clark really felt sorry. He said that the other losers were young enough to take up their usual occupations again, but "the illustrious Hoosier" had been in Congress for over thirty years, and "to serve his country well" had become his sole remaining passion. "To take that opportunity away from him," Clark said, "was to rob him of the power of enjoyment. . . . He felt it keenly, and all others sympathized with him."<sup>127</sup>

Thus ended another era in Holman's congressional career. It began with the forty-seventh Congress in 1881, and ended with the fifty-third on March 3, 1895. It was one of the most difficult periods in his whole political life. The Democrats were in control of the House five times in the seven Congresses, but only once, in the fifty-third, were they also in control of the Senate. Even when they had an opportunity of enacting constructive legislation, their attempts were thwarted by the Republican Senate. Holman's policy throughout this long period was retrenchment and reform, but his party did not always support him in his program. It was a period of industrialism and business consolidation, but Holman represented the fast-disappearing agrarian philosophy of government. He was Jeffersonian in the day of "big business," and his political ideas were out of harmony with the modern trend. America was taking its place among the great powers of the world while Holman continued to plead for simplicity and frugality in government. However, he sensed danger and serious problems in the changing economic system and was wiser in his confusion than those political leaders who readily drifted along with the tides of industrial transformation.

## CHAPTER VIII

### END OF AN ERA

**O**N MARCH 18, 1896, just as the sun was setting, Abigail Knapp Holman, the wife of the veteran statesman, died. Although she had been in failing health for some time, her death was sudden. She had lived seventy-two years, yet "it seemed as if her heart lived always in the summer, and the winter of old age could only touch her body." Her life was filled with service of love and duty to others. She was a devoted mother to her children and was intensely interested in the affairs of her husband during the long years of his congressional career. Her loving sympathy, her encouragement, her excellent judgment proved her an indispensable companion. She was for many years a faithful member of the First Baptist Church of Aurora, Indiana, where she was buried in the River View Cemetery after a simple, impressive service.<sup>1</sup>

Holman never recovered from the blow inflicted by the death of his wife. It was a trial too severe to be endured without visible traces of its terrible strain. One of his colleagues remarked: "He could guide his steps with wisdom along the snares and pitfalls of public life; he could meet the storms and tempests of acrimonious debate; he could bear the 'whips and scorns' of unjust censure," but his tender heart burst "when this companion of half a century was stricken."<sup>2</sup> In spite of his age, he was still strong and vigorous, with mental faculties keen, clear and active, yet to those of his family and more intimate friends, it was painfully noticeable that the weight of his affliction was manifestly telling upon him, and he constantly brooded over his great bereavement. Many of his close friends thought he would never survive the shock.<sup>3</sup>

In 1896, however, Holman again became a candidate for election to the House of Representatives from the fourth Indiana district. In order to furnish relief from his recent sorrow, he threw himself vigorously into the campaign. By this time, the



Populists had gained considerable strength. Both the national and state elections centered around the silver issue. It has already been observed that Holman supported practically all the policies of the People's Party, but in 1896, as in 1894, he remained in the Democratic ranks.

There were several important political parties in the 1896 campaign. Among them were the Republican, the Democratic, the People's and the Silver parties. In its national convention at St. Louis, the Republican Party declared itself unreservedly for "sound money," and "unalterably opposed to every measure calculated to debase our currency or impair the credit of our country." Its members opposed the free coinage of silver, "except by international agreement." The platform declared that "all our silver and paper currency must be maintained at parity with gold." William McKinley, of Ohio, and Garret A. Hobart, of New Jersey, were the candidates for President and Vice-President.

The result of the Republican convention intensified public interest in the Democratic national convention which met at Chicago. The Democrats, however, were not united in their opposition to gold, but the "sound money" element, being in the minority, had little influence in the convention and they were kept from controlling the activities of the assembly. The platform, as finally adopted, declared that the Democrats were "unalterably opposed to monometallism," as "not only un-American, but anti-American." They demanded "the free and unlimited coinage of both silver and gold at the present legal ratio of sixteen to one." A contrary minority platform was rejected by a vote of over two to one. William Jennings Bryan of Nebraska delivered his stirring "cross of gold" speech favoring the silver plank. He was nominated for the presidency on the fifth ballot. Arthur Sewell, of Maine, was chosen as his running-mate.

The People's Party and the Silver Party both held their conventions in St. Louis on July 22. The former composed not only the Populists, but also many bolters from the Republican Party. The People's convention adopted a silver plank identical with that of the Democrats and also nominated Bryan, although Thomas E. Watson, of Georgia, took the place of Sewell as the vice-presidential nominee. The National Silver Party also fol-

lowed the lead of the Democratic convention on the silver issue and nominated both Bryan and Sewell as their candidates. A minority group of Democrats, calling themselves the National Democratic Party, met at Indianapolis. They denounced the silver stand of the regular Democratic and People's parties, and declared for a gold standard; but as they could not bring themselves to support the rest of the Republican platform and candidates, they chose John M. Palmer, of Illinois, and General Simon B. Buckner, of Kentucky, as their leaders.

The campaign of 1896 was said to be "one of the sharpest, most memorable, and for a brief season the most doubtful, of all that have taken place since the election of Mr. Lincoln."<sup>4</sup> Holman himself supported, as usual, the regular Democratic ticket which, as has been seen, had almost absorbed the People's and Silver parties. His constituents knew exactly where he stood as he had always favored a bimetallic currency.

The Democratic disaffection against Holman in the 1894 campaign was forgotten, and he now received 23,594 votes, against 22,769 for his Republican opponent, Marcus R. Sulzer.<sup>5</sup> Nicholas Smith, the Prohibition candidate, received only 121 votes. The district again went Democratic by a vote of 23,670 for Bryan, and 22,930 for McKinley, although McKinley's total vote in the state was 323,748 as compared with 306,206 for Bryan.<sup>6</sup> The entire Republican state ticket was elected by something over 25,000 plurality. Charles W. Fairbanks was elected to the Senate—the first Republican Senator chosen from Indiana since 1881—to succeed Daniel W. Voorhees. The "watchdog of the treasury" was among the four Democratic Representatives elected to serve in the House with nine Republicans from the state.<sup>7</sup>

When the special session of the fifty-fifth Congress convened in March, 1897, with Reed again the Speaker, Holman became the "father of the House," and, commencing his sixteenth term, he served long enough to exceed the tenure of any other man up to that time. The reception which greeted him was both cordial and complimentary—in reality an ovation. Old members and new hailed his return to Congress. One of his colleagues approached him to say: "Mr. Holman, it must be a proud moment in a man's life to be permitted to take the oath of office



and a seat in this assembly for the longest term of service ever held." Holman replied, in his modest way: "Oh, yes; I appreciate the goodness and the kindness of my neighbors and realize it is a great compliment, indeed."<sup>8</sup>

Holman entered into his work with his characteristic energy, a contrast to the spirit he had shown, or been obliged to show, in the preceding term. Cannon of Illinois was the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, and Holman immediately attacked several measures which came from that committee. Because of his extensive experience in handling legislation on Indian affairs, he was well-qualified to oppose a bill, ninety-two pages in length, appropriating nearly eight million dollars for the Indian Bureau. A large proportion of this amount would go not to the Indian, Holman claimed, "but to the great army of white men employed in the Indian service."<sup>9</sup>

Holman was particularly indignant, however, over the attempt of the Republicans to drive through the various appropriation bills without giving members ample opportunity to examine the measures, or to rush them through virtually without debate or opportunity for amendment. These bills aggregated an expenditure of over \$72,000,000. Holman saw no need for haste in their enactment. He appealed again, and for the last time, for economy in expenditures and called the attention of the members to their campaign promises of retrenchment.<sup>10</sup>

The last public appearance of Holman was on March 31 when he presented the petition of Dr. D. W. Fisher, president of Hanover College, regarding educational books coming into the country free of duty.<sup>11</sup> His death occurred at 2:05 P. M., in Washington, on April 22, 1897, after an illness of several weeks, due primarily to a fall which he had sustained as a result of an attack of vertigo. He had just alighted from a street-car and was crossing Dupont Circle when the attack came. After a brief rally, spinal meningitis set in, and he sank rapidly. He died without regaining consciousness. His children, Mrs. R. E. Fletcher, Mrs. Fred Harvey, William S. Holman, Jr., and Paul Holman, were at his bedside when the end came.<sup>12</sup>

In the House of Representatives, resolutions of sorrow were offered. A committee of ten members was appointed by the Speaker to act with a group from the Senate to attend the

funeral. The Sergeant-at-Arms of the House was ordered to superintend the funeral at Holman's home; and it was decided that the necessary expenses attending the execution of this order were to be paid out of the contingent fund of the House. The House then adjourned for the rest of the day as a mark of respect to Holman's memory. Similar resolutions were adopted by the Senate.<sup>13</sup>

A committee of fifteen from the two Houses accompanied the body to the little city of Aurora, Indiana, where thousands of citizens of the community and surrounding country—Holman's former friends, neighbors and constituents, men, women and children, young and old alike, as if moved by one common grief—were waiting to pay the last sad tribute of respect to their Congressman and friend. It was Sunday, April 25, and, "as the remains were borne along the streets to the old church edifice, so familiar to him in life, the eye was everywhere met with countless emblems typical of the universal sorrow which shrouded the city." The body lay in state at the church and all sexes, ages, conditions and occupations mingled in sadness around the bier, viewing for the last time the form and face of him who was regarded by many "as an honest, upright man, distinguished citizen, and eminent statesman, incorruptible in life."<sup>14</sup> In the afternoon, a final brief service was held at Ver-aestau, the ancestral homestead overlooking the town. The body was interred beside that of Mrs. Holman in the River View Cemetery.

The House held memorial services for Holman on July 8, and the Senate on December 17, 1897, when many of his associates voiced their praises of the man. Major George W. Steele of Indiana expressed the sentiments of the group when he declared that his departed colleague had filled all the positions in public life "with credit to himself, to his native State, and to his country." He was described as a born politician who knew personally as many of the voters of his district and their families as any man in public life. "He had a happy faculty of making himself at home among them." Steele described Holman as one who gave close and intelligent attention to the business of Congress and as "a man of strict integrity, always above suspicion,"



and he declared that "the world has been made better on account of his coming into it."<sup>15</sup>

Other speakers expressed similar sentiments. They paid tribute to Holman's conspicuous and honorable career and noted the various fine qualities in the man. They mentioned his kindly and benevolent nature. They praised his ability as a legislator and mourned the loss of one of the ablest, oldest and most useful members of the House. Naturally, the general tone of all of the speeches was complimentary, but a few of them showed an appreciation of Holman's minor weaknesses, such as his insistence on rigid economy when it would have been better to have been a little more generous, or when his stubbornness impeded the progress of many worthy measures through Congress. On the whole, as was to be expected, the speakers were very fair in their characterizations of the late Congressman.<sup>16</sup>

Holman had been a public servant for over half a century. Beginning his career as the probate judge of his home county of Dearborn, he was soon chosen prosecuting attorney, and in 1850 was elected senatorial delegate to the state constitutional convention. In 1851, he was elected a representative to the first General Assembly under the new constitution, and was made chairman of the judiciary committee, although he was one of the youngest members of the House. He strongly supported most of the reform measures which were adopted and was largely responsible for the passage of the bill which extended the township system to the several counties of the state. He served as common pleas judge from 1852 to 1856, during which time he received a commission as circuit judge, but he held the office of common pleas judge until the end of his term.

In 1858, Holman was elected to Congress from the fourth district, and the following year, took his seat in the thirty-sixth Congress where with only four exceptions—the thirty-ninth, forty-fifth, forty-sixth and fifty-fourth—he served until his death in 1897. His service in Congress extended over a longer period than that of any other man up to that time. He was loyal to the Democratic Party. He was a Union Democrat during the Civil War and supported all the measures of Lincoln's administration which attempted to suppress the rebellion. He was always a friend of the soldier. He earnestly opposed subsidy

from the public resources, either in bonds, lands or money, to promote private enterprises. He denounced all forms of class legislation. He earnestly championed the homestead policy as the only method of disposing of the public lands except as bounties to the soldiers and sailors of the Union army. He served faithfully as a member of the committees on War Claims, Commerce, and Public Buildings and Grounds, but his outstanding work was done as chairman of the Indian Affairs and Appropriations committees. In 1875, he was a formidable candidate for the United States Senate, and for governor in 1876 and 1880. In 1884, he was the favorite of the *New York Sun* for the Democratic nomination for President. Due largely to the Panic of 1893, he was defeated the following year by James E. Watson, but he again returned to Congress in 1897 and died less than a month later.

Throughout his long career in Congress, Holman's knowledge of all matters pertaining to federal legislation was not only extensive, but exceedingly accurate. While not an orator in the popular sense, yet he spoke with great clearness and vigor, and at times was most impressive. His integrity was one of his splendid assets. No breath of suspicion ever touched him. He was ever active, attentive and devoted to his public duties.

Holman was always a "man of the people." It has been said that he could get so near to his fellow-men that he could "hear the heart-beats of the people; and the tunes of their daily life produced for him a melody that made his own life full of sweet, simple rhythm." The old judge had often been approached by men in simple garb to ask a question, after they had allowed other Congressmen to pass by without daring to stop them. His slogan in Congress was, "Economy, Retrenchment and Reform." Sometimes he practiced it to the detriment of the various services of the government, but on the whole, his views were sound, and he thwarted many selfish schemes to plunder the treasury. Champ Clark expressed the general sentiment of the country, when he declared:

If all the money he [Holman] saved the people were expressed in silver dollars, there would be enough of them to pave a shining pathway from Martha's Vineyard to the Golden Gate; if in one-dollar bills, there would be a sufficiency to carpet the entire State of Indiana in lovely green; if



in gold, there would be more of it than there is in the Treasury of the United States.<sup>17</sup>

On another occasion, Clark said that "the noble old judge did not accumulate a vast popularity" in the House on account of his efforts at economy, but

abusing him for being stingy and deriding him as a cheese-paring statesman did not disturb his equanimity in the least. To his dying day he persisted in being the economist *par excellence* of the House. His persistence and consistency in that one thing, however, caused him to be much underrated. As a matter of fact, he was a great man. . . . If he had been elected [President] it would have put all the profiteers of that day in the dumps, and many of them in jail.<sup>18</sup>

Clark further declared:

If all the sleepless hours which Judge Holman caused his fellow-Congressmen to spend by knocking out their little bills, on which frequently their political lives depended, were added together, they would aggregate a longer stretch of time than Methuselah tabernacled in the flesh.<sup>19</sup>

Holman was of a most genial and approachable disposition. He was entirely willing to listen to any person who called for his assistance, and he constantly championed the cause of the "forgotten man." Although often obliged by his sense of duty to resist the importunities of his colleagues in favor of some measure of vital interest, he always did so in such an impersonal manner as to take away the sting of his refusal. In fact, it was one of his strong points that in his long congressional career "he refrained entirely from personalities and consequently he had few personal enemies."<sup>20</sup>

Holman was strictly honest in his dealings whether with his own or the government's affairs. Because of his generosity toward those in need, he never saved any money from his own salary, and he died a poor man. He was a kind neighbor, always looking after the welfare of others. In all his campaigns, he never resorted to personal abuse of his opponents. It was continually asserted by those members of Congress who had selfish interests to promote that his profession of economy was insincere and did not include his own district, while otherwise his pretense was as broad as the United States.<sup>21</sup>

In his political campaigns for office, Holman always paid his own expenses. They were few. He knew every voter in his district and frequently stayed all night with his rural constituents.<sup>22</sup> It was said that the judge used to request "a chew of tobacco" from the villagers who were pleased at this evidence of democracy.<sup>23</sup>

There was little display about Holman. He was provincial in his habits and tastes. Some considered him careless in dress. He wore a black suit and a black string tie which was frequently not tied or was tied in a curious fashion.<sup>24</sup>

Holman was intensely religious and was exacting in requiring obedience to religious duties. He was a life-long member of the Baptist Church. He was preeminently a gentleman of the old school. He had a reputation of never having uttered an oath or having been guilty of an expression which would not bear repetition in the presence of ladies.<sup>25</sup> Some contemporaries considered him a "plain, unpretentious, able, diligent, vigilant, patriotic, level-headed, and scrupulously honest" man. It was said that fads and frills never commended themselves to him.<sup>26</sup>

Holman loved to talk politics and "with his feet on a table and a chew of tobacco to roll about in his mouth he would discuss events back to the time of Jefferson and Jackson with a wonderful memory for detail and accuracy."<sup>27</sup> In an address delivered before the Dearborn County Bar Association on June 7, 1897, Judge Omar F. Roberts declared that in all of Judge Holman's conflicts before the public, however warm, he left no sting behind to torment anyone; but, instead, "each campaign, from his standpoint, was an era of good feeling, whereby he made friends instead of enemies, which rendered him well-nigh invincible before the people."<sup>28</sup>

One of Holman's contemporaries declared:

No sketch of "the American Commons" during the last fifty years would be in any measure complete that failed to make mention of the man who was nineteen [*sic*] times elected a Representative, the Hon. William S. Holman, of Indiana. Whatever the ups and downs of party supremacy, despite all attempts at gerrymandering to relegate him to the shades of private life, Judge Holman, with unruffled front, "a mien at once kindly, persuasive, and patient," held sturdily on his way. Amid political upheavals that overwhelmed all his associates upon the ticket, his name, like



that of Abou Ben Adhem, led all the rest. From Pierce to McKinley—whatever the issues, and howsoever determined—at each successive organization of the House “the gentleman from Indiana” was an unfailing respondent to the opening rollcall.<sup>29</sup>

It was said of Holman that:

His integrity was unquestioned; his knowledge of public business, phenomenal. With no brilliancy, little in the way of oratory, Judge Holman was nevertheless one of the most valuable members ever known to the House of Representatives. The Lobby regarded him as its mortal foe. . . . Personal appeals to his courtesy, to permit the present consideration of private bills, had, in the main, as well have been made to a marble statue. . . . [His objections] sounded the knell of many a well-devised raid upon the Treasury. It may be that he sometimes prevented the early consideration of meritorious measures, but with occasional exceptions his objections were wholesome. He kept in close touch with the popular pulse, and knew, as if by instinct, which would be the safe and which the dangerous side of the pending measure. It sometimes seemed that he could even “look into the seeds of time and tell which grain will grow and which will not.”<sup>30</sup>

Another contemporary characterized Holman as one of the most striking figures in American public life.<sup>31</sup> A political opponent, Blaine, paid him a high tribute:

His efforts were steadily and persistently directed to the enforcement of public economy; and though he may have sometimes been unreasonable, and though he was often accused of acting the part of a demagogue, the country owes him a debt of gratitude for the integrity, intelligence, and a simplicity with which he has illustrated a most honorable career as a representative of the people.<sup>32</sup>

Holman's home life was unusually pleasant. He loved his old homestead and spent as much time there as possible. At the close of a congressional session, he invariably returned to Veraestau, a model of an old southern homestead, where he tended his horses and cattle and enjoyed his flowers and books. A botanist of no mean ability, Holman saw to it that his farm contained many beautiful flower gardens filled with unusual plants. He transplanted trees from various historic spots which formed a sort of arboreal avenue of history.<sup>33</sup> It is said that when one or another of these old friends of the forest was marked for the axe he would be heard to say in as startling tones as he ever

addressed to the Speaker of the House, "I object."<sup>34</sup> He had little patience with modern improvements. The house was heated with open fireplaces and stoves. When some of the family begged for the installation of a furnace, he exclaimed, in considerable perturbation: "Furnace, indeed, do you think I want to sit over a hole in the floor?"<sup>35</sup>

Holman was passionately fond of his live stock, and his estate contained many specimens of fine horses and cattle. He could not bear to see any animal confined. He even objected to a bird in a cage. It was difficult to wean a calf on the place, for if he happened to find it penned up, he would turn it loose with its mother.<sup>36</sup>

It was only natural, of course, that many interesting anecdotes of Holman should be told. One amusing incident concerns a Congressman who wished to secure the passage of an appropriation measure, but he knew that Holman would object. The only way to accomplish his purpose was to bring up the bill when Holman was absent. Waiting until Holman was thought safe in the barber's chair, his opponents introduced the measure. But Holman heard of it, jumped from the chair and, with barber's apron still wrapped around his neck and with one side of his face shaved and the other side heavily lathered, rushed into the House shouting, "Mr. Speaker, I object!"<sup>37</sup>

Many who knew Judge Holman were familiar with his integrity and honesty, but few knew of his generosity. Mrs. Holman constantly had to restrain him from giving away his best overcoats and other articles to beggars.<sup>38</sup> She also had to keep a sharp eye on the family finances. On one occasion, she sent her husband to town with twenty-five dollars to do some shopping. He returned with nothing. "William, where are the groceries and things I asked you to purchase?" she asked. "Well," replied the judge, "I met Mugmouth Clark [a bum around town] and I am sure he needed the money more than we did, so I gave it to him."<sup>39</sup>

Some years before Holman's death an admirer wrote him expressing a desire to compile an album of the Democratic Senators and members of the House. He intended to include an acrostic characterizing each politician. For Holman he had written:



## HOLMANS OF VERAESTAU

Who is that man, tall and erect,  
In Congress saying "I object"?  
Look at him! See him nobly stand!  
Listen! and hear him now demand  
In words that must be understood,  
And calling for the Public good;  
"My protest you may enter there,"  
Such stealing never can be fair.  
Hold on! Hands off! "I do object!"  
Oh Halt! Your schemes I now reject.  
Look out! The people make demands,  
More care, and saving at our hands.  
And if we shall their voice obey,  
None need condemn the good old way.<sup>40</sup>

On the other hand, Holman sometimes was denounced as a demagogue and an exponent of "hay-seed statesmanship." A fair appraisal of his public life, however, would include the following:

He was in many respects a Jeffersonian, carrying the ideas of a simple agricultural era over into the age of railroads, industrialism, and high finance. . . . He was meticulously honest and applied his own principles of economy to expense accounts when on public service. . . . His nickname and the hostility of many contemporaries whose measures he defeated, combined with his lanky frame, simplicity of manner, careless dress, somewhat uncouth appearance, and fondness for chewing tobacco, caused his real abilities to be frequently underrated. . . . His speeches in general disclose a high order of ability and in many instances a profound insight into the injustice and hardship involved in many of the economic policies of the day. . . . Testimony is unanimous that, personally, Holman was a delightful character, with many qualities reminiscent of Lincoln, the same ability as a raconteur, and somewhat the same whimsical appreciation of the virtues and weaknesses of the common man.<sup>41</sup>

## NOTES





## NOTES

### PART I

#### CHAPTER I

<sup>1</sup> Oliver H. Smith, *Early Indiana Trials and Sketches* (Cincinnati, 1858), 5.

<sup>2</sup> David D. Banta, *History of Johnson County, Indiana* (Chicago, 1888), 82.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>5</sup> Memorandum in longhand, giving also the dates of the birth and death of various members of the Holman family. Material lent by Mrs. E. R. Rees, of Aurora, Ind., a granddaughter of Jesse L. Holman.

<sup>6</sup> Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone (eds.), *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York, 1928-1936, 20v.), IX, 158. Sketch by William O. Lynch. Information also found in papers lent by Miss Margaret H. Wagenhals, New York City, and Miss Mildred H. Wagenhals, Calistoga, California, great granddaughters of Jesse L. Holman. This collection, hereafter referred to as the Wagenhals Collection, contains correspondence and other items such as rough drafts of speeches, official documents, and briefs of court cases in which Judge Holman was interested.

<sup>7</sup> *History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties, Indiana* (Chicago, 1885), 152.

<sup>8</sup> Manuscript written by Jesse L. Holman. No date. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>9</sup> "Jesse Lynch Holman," *A Biographical History of Eminent and Self-Made Men of the State of Indiana* (Cincinnati, 1880), I, 4. The original of this sketch, written by William S. Holman, his son, was lent by Mrs. R. H. Harvey, of Washington, D. C., a granddaughter of Jesse L. Holman.

<sup>10</sup> William Cathcart, editor, *The Baptist Encyclopedia* (Philadelphia, 1883), 535.

<sup>11</sup> Judge Louis B. Ewbank, "Federal Judges of Indiana," *Indiana Magazine of History*, December, 1939, XXXV.

<sup>12</sup> Horace Bassett, manuscript in Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>13</sup> Although this statement is found in many sources, yet no positive proof of it has been found. *History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties*, 152. The most authoritative source for this information is the brief account of the life of Jesse L. Holman in the handwriting of his son, William S. Holman, lent by Mrs. Harvey.



<sup>14</sup> Mrs. Herman T. Briscoe, *The Hoosier School of Fiction*, 9, note. This is a Master's thesis in typewritten form in the Indiana University Library.

<sup>15</sup> Mrs. E. S. Rees to Mrs. Herman T. Briscoe, Aurora, Indiana, April 9, 1934. Lent to author by Mrs. Briscoe.

<sup>16</sup> Briscoe, *op. cit.*, 10.

<sup>17</sup> Recently, two volumes have been found, one in the possession of Professor William I. Bartlett, of Roanoke, Virginia, and the other in the Howard Memorial Library at New Orleans. Information regarding the volume in the possession of Professor Bartlett was secured through correspondence between Professor Bartlett and Mr. Cornelius O'Brien of Lawrenceburg, Indiana, the present owner of the Holman estate, Veraestau. Mr. O'Brien kindly transmitted copies of the correspondence to the author. The volume found in the New Orleans library is mentioned in Lyle H. Wright, *American Fiction, 1774-1850*: . . . 1939, p. 90. This latter information is contained in a letter to the author from Miss Esther U. McNitt, late Chief, Indiana Division, Indiana State Library, Nov. 25, 1939. Unfortunately the author has not been able to examine either of these copies. The criticisms which are given are those of Professor Bartlett; and are found in his letter to Mr. O'Brien Nov. 29, 1935.

<sup>18</sup> "Jesse Lynch Holman," *A Biographical History of Eminent and Self-Made Men*, *op. cit.*, I, 34.

<sup>19</sup> William I. Bartlett to Cornelius O'Brien, Roanoke, Va., Nov. 29, 1935.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> "Jesse Lynch Holman," *A Biographical History* . . . , *op. cit.*, I, 34. The two longer poems referred to are now in the Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>22</sup> October 24, 1784, is accepted as the date of his birth. If this is correct, then Holman was not yet twenty-one years old when he was granted a license to practice law.

<sup>23</sup> Cathcart, *op. cit.*, 535.

<sup>24</sup> *Memorial Addresses on the Life and Character of William S. Holman* (Washington, 1898), 24.

<sup>25</sup> According to a memorandum lent to the author by Mrs. Rees.

<sup>26</sup> *History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties*, *op. cit.*, 152.

<sup>27</sup> Harlow Lindley, ed., *Indiana as Seen by Early Travelers* (Indianapolis, 1916), 148. Quoted from *The Western Gazetteer; or Emigrant's Directory*, account by Samuel R. Brown.

<sup>28</sup> Elmer Davis, "Mt. Veraestau and the Holmans of Today and Yesterday," feature article in *Indianapolis Sunday Star*, October 13, 1907. Lent by Mrs. E. E. Ilgenfritz, Lakewood, Ohio, great-granddaughter of Jesse L. Holman. Another copy was also lent by Mr. H. Dennis Young, Oakland, California, whose wife is a great-great-granddaughter of Jesse L. Holman.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius O'Brien, Aurora, Indiana, made further

additions to the Hamilton House in 1937, restored the William S. Holman house in 1938, and restored the Jesse L. Holman house in 1941.

## CHAPTER II

<sup>1</sup> John B. Stoll, *History of Indiana Democracy, 1816-1916* (Indianapolis, 1917), 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>3</sup> *History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties*, 152.

<sup>4</sup> An original copy of the appointment, signed by Governor Harrison, is in the Wagenhals Collection. On the back side of the document there is the certification, dated June 28, 1811, that Holman personally appeared in open court and took the oath of allegiance to the United States of America, to support the Constitution thereof and the Ordinance of Congress for the government of Indiana Territory; and also the oath of office as prosecuting attorney for Dearborn County, signed by the clerk of the Court of Common Pleas.

<sup>5</sup> Logan Esarey (ed.), *Governors' Messages and Letters, Messages and Papers of Jonathan Jennings, Ratliff Boon, and William Hendricks*, (Indianapolis, 1924), III, 37.

<sup>6</sup> The original is in the Wagenhals Collection. Benjamin Parke was a noted judge and leader of early Indiana and Henry Vandenburg an early pioneer statesman.

<sup>7</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, 6.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>12</sup> Louis B. Ewbank and Dorothy L. Riker, editors, *The Laws of Indiana Territory* (Indianapolis, 1934), 847.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 828. The original certification, dated May 14, 1814, and signed by James Dill, clerk of Dearborn County, declares that Holman received 137 votes and Jabez Percival received 63 votes, giving Holman a majority of 74 votes. This original is in the Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 829.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* The original proclamation by Governor Posey is in the possession of Miss Mildred H. Wagenhals, Calistoga, California.

<sup>16</sup> *History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties*, 152.

<sup>17</sup> Ewbank and Riker, *op. cit.*, 829.

<sup>18</sup> This oath contained a clause against duelling.

<sup>19</sup> Ewbank and Riker, *op. cit.*, 822.

<sup>20</sup> Banta, *op. cit.*, 120.

<sup>21</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, 118-19.

<sup>22</sup> Ewbank and Riker, *op. cit.*, 829.

<sup>23</sup> John B. Dillon, *History of Indiana* (Indianapolis, 1859), 559.

<sup>24</sup> Banta, *op. cit.*, 122.

<sup>25</sup> Stoll, *op. cit.*, 31.



<sup>26</sup> Logan Esarey, ed., *Governors' Messages and Letters*, III, 14, note.

<sup>27</sup> The original notification of Holman's election, signed by Jonathan Jennings and dated Corydon, Nov. 14, 1816, is in the Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>28</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, 84.

<sup>29</sup> Stoll, *op. cit.*, 28. Jennings received 5,211 votes to 3,934 for Thomas Posey.

<sup>30</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, 84. Johnson lived but a short time, and Isaac Blackford, of Vincennes, a young lawyer from New Jersey, originally, and a graduate of Princeton, was appointed in his place on Sept. 10, 1817.

<sup>31</sup> Isaac Blackford, *Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Supreme Court of Judicature of the State of Indiana* (Indianapolis, 1830-36), I, 1. The original commission, signed by Jonathan Jennings, but with the day of the month of December, 1816, left blank, together with the certification signed by Issac Dunn that Holman took the oath of office on January 9, 1817, are in the Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>32</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, 144.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Charles W. Taylor, *Biographical Sketches and Review of the Bench and Bar of Indiana* (Indianapolis, 1895), 32.

<sup>35</sup> Stoll, *op. cit.*, 123.

<sup>36</sup> Horace Bassett, manuscript in Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>37</sup> Horace E. Scudder, ed., *Indiana* (Indianapolis, 1888), 439-40.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 441.

<sup>39</sup> The originals of both documents are in the Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>40</sup> Jesse L. Holman to Allen Hamilton, Indianapolis, May 25, 1829. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>41</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, 85.

<sup>42</sup> *Western Sun*, May 22, 1819.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Governors' Messages and Letters*, III, 22.

<sup>45</sup> Jesse L. Holman to Brown, May 19, 1819. No post office address is given. Wagenhals Collection. The last preceding quotation is an excerpt from this same letter.

<sup>46</sup> Jonathan Jennings to Holman, Corydon, Dec. 19, 1818. Wagenhals Collection. Holman was again mentioned in 1825 as a candidate for governor, but declined. *cf. Indianapolis Gazette*, March, 1825.

<sup>47</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, 85. *cf. Governors' Messages and Letters*, III, 37.

<sup>48</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, 85.

<sup>49</sup> Stoll, *op. cit.*, 31.

<sup>50</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, 144.

<sup>51</sup> Horace Bassett to Holman, Logansport, Nov. 13, 1830. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>52</sup> Charles H. Test to Holman, Rushville, Nov. 16, 1830. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>53</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, 144.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> William Wesley Woolen, *Biographical and Historical Sketches of Early Indiana* (Indianapolis, 1883), 57.

<sup>56</sup> John Test to Holman, Washington, Feb. 19, 1831. Wagenhals Collection. Jos. Holman was a grand-nephew of Jesse Holman.

<sup>57</sup> Elmer Davis, "Mt. Veraestau and the Holmans of Today and Yesterday," *Indianapolis Sunday Star*, October 13, 1907.

<sup>58</sup> Dennis Pennington to Holman, Corydon, April 11, 1831. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>59</sup> *Governors' Messages and Letters*, III, 37.

<sup>60</sup> "Jesse Lynch Holman," *A Biographical History of Eminent and Self-Made Men of the State of Indiana*, I, 35. The original of this, in the handwriting of William Steele Holman, is in the possession of Mrs. Fred Harvey, Washington, D. C., by whom it was lent to the author. According to tradition, Holman was defeated by only one vote, but this is obviously an error, as no proof can be found to substantiate it. cf., *Journal of the Senate of the State of Indiana*, 1831.

<sup>61</sup> David Hoover to Holman, Richmond, Ind., August 13, 1831. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>62</sup> John A. Farnham to Holman, Jeffersonville, Ind., August 22, 1831. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>63</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Indianapolis, Nov. 9, 1831. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>64</sup> The writing is quite illegible, and the spelling and punctuation are very poor. The reader will have no difficulty, however, in understanding the rather obvious implications.

<sup>65</sup> S. M. Levenworth to Holman, Levenworth, December 24, 1831. Wagenhals Collection. The original spelling is used, although the writing is not very legible.

<sup>66</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Veraestau. The letter is dated December 3, 1832, but this is obviously a mistake. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* The "Richard" referred to is Richard Henry Holman, who died in 1841, in his twenty-fifth year, of pulmonary consumption.

<sup>68</sup> *Biographical History of Eminent Men*, I, 35.

<sup>69</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Veraestau, Feb. 20, 1832. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>70</sup> Both documents are in the Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>71</sup> A brief resume of the life of Judge Parke is included in Louis B. Ewbank, "Judges of the Federal District Court in Indiana," *Indiana Magazine of History* (Dec., 1939), XXXV, 371-87.

<sup>72</sup> Taylor, *op. cit.*, 14.

<sup>73</sup> Copies of the letters written to and from Holman pertaining to this appointment may be found in the author's "Seeking a Federal Judgeship Under Jackson," *Indiana Magazine of History* (Sept., 1939), XXXV, 311-25. The originals are in the Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>74</sup> The originals of both documents are in the Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>75</sup> Taylor, *op. cit.*, 15.



<sup>76</sup> Amos Lane to Holman, Washington, Dec. 19, 1835. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>77</sup> Stoll, *op. cit.*, 31.

<sup>78</sup> Peter Brady to Holman, Washington, Sept. 11, [probably 1836.] Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>79</sup> Cathcart, *op. cit.*, 535.

<sup>80</sup> Logan Esarey, *A History of Indiana* (Fort Wayne, 1924, 3rd. edition), 326.

<sup>81</sup> "The Negro Question," manuscript, evidently a rough draft, in handwriting of Holman. No date given. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>82</sup> R. R. Gorby [?] to Holman, Washington, Nov. 26, 1835. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>83</sup> "The Negro Question," Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> G. H. Dunn to Holman, Washington, Jan. 2, 1837. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>86</sup> Stoll, *op. cit.*, 25.

<sup>87</sup> "Seeking a Federal Judgeship Under Jackson," *loc. cit.*, 311-25.

<sup>88</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, Feb. 10, 1836. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>89</sup> William Hendricks to Holman, Washington, Mar. 29, 1836. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>90</sup> The original document is in the Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>91</sup> Taylor, *op. cit.*, 15.

<sup>92</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, 147.

<sup>93</sup> Copies of the proceedings, written by Horace Bassett, clerk of the United States District Court, were lent to the author by Mrs. Emerine Rees, Aurora, Ind., and Mr. Cornelius O'Brien, Lawrenceburg, Indiana.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> Horace Bassett, "Jesse Lynch Holman," manuscript in Wagenhals Collection. On April 1, 1939, the members of the bar presented to Judge Robert C. Baltzell, of the United States court for the southern district of Indiana, photographs or portraits of all of his ten predecessors, including Jesse Lynch Holman. The ten pictures have been hung on the walls of the district court library room at Indianapolis. They are arranged from the right, near the southeast corner, in the order of their succession. The authenticity of Holman's picture, however, has not been verified, although there is reason to believe that it is a good likeness of the judge.

<sup>97</sup> Quoted in Ewbank and Riker, *op. cit.*, 660.

<sup>98</sup> Harlow Lindley, ed., *Indiana as Seen by Early Travelers* (Indianapolis, 1916), 204. Quoted from E. Dana, *Geographical Sketches on the Western Country* (1819).

<sup>99</sup> *History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties*, 303.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> From the *Atlas of Dearborn County, Indiana* (Philadelphia, 1875), 10.

<sup>103</sup> Lindley, *op. cit.*, 148. Quoted from the *Western Gazetteer: or Emigrant's Directory*, by Samuel R. Brown (1817).

<sup>104</sup> Horace Bassett, "Jesse Lynch Holman," manuscript in Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>105</sup> *History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties*, 324.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.* 605.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 152. Holman must have been re-elected to this position, as an original certification, dated the first Monday in August, 1834, and signed by James Dill, clerk of the Dearborn Circuit Court, is in the Wagenhals Collection. He took the oath of office on Sept. 22, 1835, before Horace Bassett, justice of the peace. Both documents are in the Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>109</sup> This information was supplied to the author in a letter from Mrs. Sumner Hayward, November 17, 1939. Mrs. Hayward has been doing research on the life of John McCoy. McCoy's spelling of the name as "Holeman" was natural, as it was the spelling earlier used by the Holman family.

<sup>110</sup> Christopher B. Coleman, ed., *Centennial Handbook Indiana Historical Society 1830-1930* (Indianapolis, 1930), 6.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>113</sup> Horace Bassett, "Jesse Lynch Holman," *loc. cit.* Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>114</sup> *History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties*, 328.

<sup>115</sup> Quoted by Stoll, *op. cit.*, 22.

<sup>116</sup> John F. Cady, "One Hundred Years of Baptist History in Indiana," manuscript in process of publication, lent to the author.

<sup>117</sup> *History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties*, 328.

<sup>118</sup> *Memorial Addresses on the Life and Character of William S. Holman*, 15. Speech of Mr. Zenor.

<sup>119</sup> *History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties*, 328.

<sup>120</sup> Cathcart, *op. cit.*, 535.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> "Jesse Lynch Holman," *Biographical History*, I, 35.

<sup>123</sup> Cady MS.

<sup>124</sup> "Jesse Lynch Holman," *Biographical History*, I, 35.

<sup>125</sup> Cathcart, *op. cit.*, 535.

<sup>126</sup> Cady MS.

<sup>127</sup> Particularly the more liberal and progressive element.

<sup>128</sup> Quoted in *History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties*, 152.

<sup>129</sup> Cathcart, *op. cit.*, 535.

<sup>130</sup> B. P. Aydelotte to Holman, Cincinnati, April 20, 1829. Wagenhals Collection.



<sup>131</sup> Frederick A. Porter to Holman, Philadelphia, Mar. 19, 1831. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>132</sup> Samuel Newbery to Holman, Indianapolis, Dec. 12, 1831. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>133</sup> Cady MS.

<sup>134</sup> "The Negro Question," manuscript, rough draft, written by Holman, Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>135</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Veraestau, Feb. 10, 1829. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>136</sup> Cathcart, *op. cit.*, 535.

<sup>137</sup> Cady MS.

<sup>138</sup> John F. Cady, *History of Franklin College, 1834-1934* (Privately printed, 1934), 15.

<sup>139</sup> Cady MS.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> Cathcart, *op. cit.*, 535.

<sup>143</sup> Cady, *History of Franklin College*, 23.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>145</sup> Quoted by Cady, *History of Franklin College*, 27.

<sup>146</sup> William T. Stott, *First Half Century of Franklin College* (Cincinnati, 1884), 30, 47.

<sup>147</sup> Quoted, *ibid.*, 32.

<sup>148</sup> Theophilus A. Wylie, *History of Indiana University* (Indianapolis, 1890), 9 and 20. A Seminary was provided for by an act passed and approved on January 20, 1820, but it was not opened until May, 1824. The name of the Seminary was changed to Indiana College in 1828. Bulletin of Indiana University, 1936, page 67.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, 21. This information furnished by letter from President Herman B Wells to Mr. Paul Feltus of Bloomington, Ind., who forwarded it to Mr. Cornelius O'Brien. The minutes of the Board of Trustees do not show that Holman attended any of the Board meetings, however.

<sup>150</sup> Horace Bassett, "Jesse Lynch Holman," MS. in Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>151</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Veraestau, Jan. 18, 1829. Wagenhals Collection.

<sup>152</sup> Letter from Miss Margaret H. Wagenhals to the author, New York City, March 3, 1940.

<sup>153</sup> From material lent to the author by Mr. H. Dennis Young, Oakland, California.

<sup>154</sup> Elmer Davis, "Mt. Veraestau and the Holmans of Today and Yesterday," Indianapolis *Sunday Star*, October 13, 1907.

<sup>155</sup> Taylor, *op. cit.*, 33.

## PART II

## CHAPTER III

<sup>1</sup> *Dictionary of American Biography*, IX, 158. Sketch by William A. Robinson.

<sup>2</sup> *Memorial Addresses*, 61.

<sup>3</sup> Cady, *History of Franklin College*, 36.

<sup>4</sup> Stott, *First Half Century of Franklin College*, 146. The date when Holman last attended the college is given as 1839, although in Cady, *History of Franklin College*, 39-40, it is stated that "At the opening of the school year in 1840 none of the students but Holman's son, William, would recite to [President] Tilton, and the board had no choice but to dismiss the teacher."

<sup>5</sup> *Dictionary of American Biography*, IX, 158.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, but cf. *History of Dearborn County*, 763, which gives the date as 1849.

<sup>7</sup> *Dearborn Independent*, June 10, 1897, an editorial which is a copy of an address delivered by Judge Omar F. Roberts before the Dearborn County Bar Association on Monday, June 7, 1897. This item was lent to the author by Miss Abigail Holman of Aurora, Indiana, and another copy was lent by Mrs. E. E. Ilgenfritz, of Lakewood, Ohio.

<sup>8</sup> *Memorial Addresses*, 116.

<sup>9</sup> This information was furnished to the author by Miss Abigail Holman.

<sup>10</sup> *Indiana Constitution of 1816*, Article VIII.

<sup>11</sup> Logan Esarey, *A History of Indiana* (Indianapolis, 1915-1918), 450.

<sup>12</sup> Christopher B. Coleman, "Development of State Constitutions," *Indiana Magazine of History*, VII, 41.

<sup>13</sup> *Indiana State Journal*, Jan. 5, 1847.

<sup>14</sup> *Tri-weekly State Journal*, Jan. 15, 1847.

<sup>15</sup> Esarey, *op. cit.*, I, 451.

<sup>16</sup> Esarey, *op. cit.*, I, 453.

<sup>17</sup> Charles Kettleborough, *Constitution Making in Indiana* 3 vols. (Indianapolis, 1916, 1930), I, 71.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>19</sup> The rate was \$3.00 per day. Each member received \$381.00 for the 127-day session, according to the *Journal of the Convention of the People of the State of Indiana to Amend the Constitution* (Indianapolis, 1851. Reprint, Indianapolis, 1936), 986, hereafter referred to as *Conven. Journal*. Holman was also allowed \$26.40 for mileage, *Conven. Journal*, 987. The total expense of the convention was \$85,043.82. Esarey, *op. cit.*, I, 461.

<sup>20</sup> Kettleborough, *op. cit.*, 75. The new First Baptist Church on Meridian Street was also considered as a suitable meeting-place. *Conven. Journal*, 46, *passim*.

<sup>21</sup> Kettleborough, *op. cit.*, 79.

<sup>22</sup> *Indianapolis Journal*, Oct. 7, 1850.



<sup>23</sup> Esarey, *op. cit.*, I, 456. Holman and Hendricks were roommates. Some time later, in speaking of their manner of living while at the convention, Holman said: "Three of us roomed together in a big, old-fashioned room, with a bed in each of three corners and a washstand in the other. The table was right in the center of the room, and there we used to sit." Holcombe and Skinner, *op. cit.*, 109.

<sup>24</sup> *Report of the Debates and Proceedings of the Convention for the Revision of the Constitution of the State of Indiana, 1850* (Indianapolis, 1850. Reprint, 1935), 3. Hereafter referred to as *Conven. Debates*.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-5.

<sup>26</sup> Holcombe and Skinner, *op. cit.*, 109.

<sup>27</sup> Omar F. Roberts, *Dearborn Independent*, June 10, 1897.

<sup>28</sup> *Conven. Journal*, 50.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 53. It was this committee which was responsible for the section in the constitution which provided that any person of good moral character and possessing the right of suffrage, should be entitled to admission to practice in all the courts of the state. The section has since been repealed.

<sup>30</sup> *Conven. Journal*, 148.

<sup>31</sup> *Conven. Journal*, 114.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 462 ff.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 467.

<sup>35</sup> *Conven. Journal*, 249.

<sup>36</sup> *Conven. Debates*, 502.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 503.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 508.

<sup>39</sup> *Conven. Journal*, 276.

<sup>40</sup> *Conven. Debates*, 1153.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 1155.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 1173.

<sup>44</sup> *Conven. Journal*, 454.

<sup>45</sup> *Conven. Debates*, 1628.

<sup>46</sup> Holcombe and Skinner, *op. cit.*, 122.

<sup>47</sup> *Conven. Debates*, 348, *passim*.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 354.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 355.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Esarey, *op. cit.*, I, 458, note.

<sup>52</sup> *Conven. Debates*, 744.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 902 ff.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 629 *passim*.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 937-38.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 1663.

- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, passim.  
<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 1690.  
<sup>61</sup> Esarey, *op. cit.*, I, 457.  
<sup>62</sup> Stoll, *op. cit.*, 132.  
<sup>63</sup> *Conven. Journal*, 87.  
<sup>64</sup> Esarey, *op. cit.*, I, 458-59.  
<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 459.  
<sup>66</sup> Kettleborough, *op. cit.*, 88.  
<sup>67</sup> Esarey, *op. cit.*, I, 460.  
<sup>68</sup> Kettleborough, *op. cit.*, 88.  
<sup>69</sup> Omar F. Roberts, *Dearborn Independent*, June 10, 1897.  
<sup>70</sup> *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Indiana During the Thirty-Sixth Session of the General Assembly, Commencing December 1, 1851* (Indianapolis, 1851-1852), 4. Hereafter referred to as *House Journal*, 36 sess.  
<sup>71</sup> *House Journal*, 36 sess., 32.  
<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 1754.  
<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 733.  
<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 407.  
<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 424.  
<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 503.  
<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.  
<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 560.  
<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 675 and 702.  
<sup>82</sup> Omar F. Roberts, *Dearborn Independent*, June 10, 1897.  
<sup>83</sup> *The Constitutional Convention of Indiana of 1850-51* (pamphlet, Washington, 1886).  
<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>87</sup> *Dictionary of American Biography*.  
<sup>88</sup> Omar F. Roberts, *Dearborn Independent*, June 10, 1897.  
<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER IV

<sup>1</sup> *Memorial Addresses on the Life and Character of William Steele Holman* (Washington, 1898), 17. Speech of Mr. Zenor.

<sup>2</sup> Letter found in Hamilton Collection in the Indiana State Library. It has no date or signature, but the date is probably 1856. Hamilton was Holman's brother-in-law. This material will hereafter be referred to as the Allen Hamilton Collection.

<sup>3</sup> Logan Esarey, "The Pioneer Aristocracy," *Indiana Magazine of His-*



tory, XIII, 275; Joseph E. Layton, *Sources of Population in Indiana, 1816-1850* (Indiana State Library Bulletin, XI, No. 3, Indianapolis, 1916).

<sup>4</sup> *Dictionary of American Biography*, III, 45. Sketch of Bright by Logan Esarey.

<sup>5</sup> *Congressional Globe* 33 Cong., 1 sess., 532. Hereafter referred to as *Cong. Globe*.

<sup>6</sup> Charles Kettleborough, "Indiana on the Eve of the Civil War," *Indiana Historical Society Publications*, VI., No. 1, 144; *Indiana Magazine of History*, XIII, 224-47; *Ibid.*, XVIII, 61-78.

<sup>7</sup> cf., footnote 2, above.

<sup>8</sup> *Memorial Addresses*, *op. cit.*, 17.

<sup>9</sup> Speech delivered at Hubble's X Roads, July 4, 1856 (pamphlet, N.P., N.D., "printed by request of the citizens").

<sup>10</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, Dec. 9, 1859. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>11</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 36 Cong., 1 sess., 2.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 198.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 269 ff.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 634.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 638.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 650.

<sup>19</sup> Holman to Addison Bookwalter, editor of the Lawrenceburg, Ind., *Register*, Washington, Feb. 3, 1860. Holman Collection in Indiana State Library. This is a collection of miscellaneous letters and newspaper clippings which Holman had preserved in a folder. Many of the clippings are not identified as to name and date of the newspaper. Hereafter referred to as Holman Collection.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Newspaper clipping, Holman Collection.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 36 Cong., 1 sess., 191 ff.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 513.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Quoted in *Memorial Addresses*, *op. cit.*, 63. Speech of Mr. Bromwell.

<sup>31</sup> Woolen, *op. cit.*, 229.

<sup>32</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, Dec. 28, 1859. Allen Hamilton Collection.

<sup>33</sup> Holman to Cornelius O'Brien, Washington, March 2, 1860. This letter was lent to the author by O'Brien's grandson, Mr. Cornelius O'Brien, of Lawrenceburg, Ind., the present owner of the Holman estate

at Aurora, Ind. Hereafter, this material will be referred to as the O'Brien Collection.

<sup>34</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, Dec. 28, 1859. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>35</sup> Same to Same, Washington, May 15, 1860. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>36</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 36 Cong., 1 sess., 1868 ff.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Lawrenceburg (Ind.) *Register*, May 11, 1860. Clipping in Holman Collection.

<sup>40</sup> Newspaper clipping in Holman Collection. Holman's views throughout this period were identical with those of Stephen A. Douglas, although the author has been unable to find in the Douglas papers in the University of Chicago Library, or elsewhere, any evidence that the two men were ever in correspondence on the matter.

<sup>41</sup> Kettleborough, *Indiana on the Eve of the Civil War*, 150-56 *passim*. Bright stumped the state for Breckinridge. Woollen, *op. cit.*, 330.

<sup>42</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, May 15, 1860. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>43</sup> Newspaper clipping. Holman Collection.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> Lawrenceburg (Ind.) *Register*, May 11, 1860.

<sup>47</sup> Jesse L. Holman to Allen Hamilton, Aurora, Ind., August 23, 1860. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>48</sup> W. S. Holman to Allen Hamilton, Aurora, Sept. 4, 1860. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>49</sup> Same to Same, Aurora, Sept. 28, 1860. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>50</sup> Same to Same, Aurora, Oct. 20, 1860. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>51</sup> Same to Same, Aurora, Nov. 18, 1860. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Holman to a Mr. Nelson, Washington, Dec. 6, 1860. Holman Collection.

<sup>54</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, Dec. 13, 1860. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Same to Same, Washington, Dec. 28, 1860. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>57</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 36 Cong., 2 sess., 221.

<sup>58</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, December 28, 1860. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 36 Cong., 2 sess., 78.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> Newspaper clipping, Holman Collection, commenting on the action of a mass meeting of citizens of Dearborn County.



<sup>65</sup> Newspaper clipping. Holman Collection.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, Dec. 13, 1860. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>68</sup> Same to Same, Washington, Dec. 28, 1860. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>69</sup> Same to same, Washington, Jan. 11, 1861. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> Holman to Cornelius O'Brien, Washington, no date. The envelope is marked "received, Jan. 16, '61." O'Brien Collection.

<sup>72</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, Jan. 18, 1861. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>73</sup> Holman to John H. Ferry, Washington. Jan. 10, 1861. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>74</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 36 Cong., 2 sess., 815.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 873.

<sup>76</sup> Holman to a Dr. Van Horn, Washington, Jan. 19, 1861, in newspaper clipping. Holman Collection.

<sup>77</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 36 Cong., 2 sess., 418 ff.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> Newspaper clipping. Holman Collection

<sup>81</sup> Charles B. Murphy, *The Political Career of Jesse D. Bright* (Indiana Historical Society Publication, Vol. X, No. 3, Indianapolis, 1931), 135. Bright's career in the Senate came to a sudden and stormy end when he was expelled on Feb. 2, 1862, by a vote of thirty-two to fourteen. On March 1, 1861, he had written a polite and cordial letter to President Jefferson Davis, of the Confederate States, in which he introduced a friend who had improved firearms for sale. The letter was produced in the Senate, and after a debate of twenty-one days, in which thirty-three Senators participated, Bright was expelled, perhaps as much through personal and political opposition, as on the charge of treason. He later served in the Kentucky legislature.

<sup>82</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, Feb. 18, 1861. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>83</sup> Same to Same, Aurora, April 13, 1861. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>84</sup> Quoted by Edward Channing, *A History of the United States* (New York, 1930), VI, 315.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 36 Cong., 1 sess., 2203.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 2200.

## CHAPTER V

<sup>1</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 37 Cong., 1 sess., 24.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 152 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 37 Cong., 2 sess., 15, 1042.

<sup>7</sup> Edward Stanwood, *A History of the Presidency* (rev. ed., Boston, 1898), 293.

<sup>8</sup> *U. S. Statutes-at-Large*, XII, 192-93.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* This whole subject is treated in William Robert Stevenson, *The Movement for Reform of the Public Land Policies, 1862-1891* (unpublished Master's thesis, Cornell University, 1939), lent through the courtesy of the Cornell University Library.

<sup>10</sup> *House Journal*, 36 Cong., 1 sess., 456, 501, 503, 885. *cf. Cong. Globe*, 37 Cong., 2 sess., 1035.

<sup>11</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 37 Cong., 2 sess., 1031.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 133-35.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 23, 47.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 1030-32.

<sup>15</sup> Edward Channing, *A History of the United States* (New York, 1930), VI. 300. *cf.*, Fred Albert Shannon, *Organization and Administration of the Union Army* (Cleveland, 1928) II, 321-22.

<sup>16</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 37 Cong., 2 sess., 298.

<sup>17</sup> From Indiana, for instance, Governor Oliver P. Morton sent a telegram to Holman on Jan. 9, 1862, requesting him to visit the state and examine expenditures and other matters in connection with the war. Evidently, Morton thought that Holman was directing his attacks partly against him. Newspaper clipping, *Daily Journal*, Jan. 22, 1862. Holman Collection.

<sup>18</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 37 Cong., 2 sess., 603.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 708-10 *passim*.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted from Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln, The War Years* (New York, 1939), I, 425.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 430.

<sup>22</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 37 Cong., 2 sess., Appendix, 130 ff.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Cong. Record*, 43 Cong., 2 sess., 2084.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 37 Cong., 2 sess., Appendix, 130 ff.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, Jan. 17, 1862. Lincoln Collection, Lincoln Life Insurance Co., Fort Wayne, Ind.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 38 Cong., 1 sess., 45, 99, 117.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 196.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 37 Cong., 2 sess., 2663.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 37 Cong. 3 sess., 1105-06.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 1107.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 6, 524, 555-56.



<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 525.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 259.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 770.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 770-72 *passim*.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 36 Cong., 2 sess., 336 ff.

<sup>43</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 37 Cong., 2 sess., 216, 217, 521.

<sup>44</sup> Oliver G. Bailey to Cornelius O'Brien, Cincinnati, Ohio, April 6, 1938. O'Brien Collection. The Morgan referred to was the Confederate General John Hunt Morgan, who made a raid through southern Indiana in 1863.

<sup>45</sup> Francis M. Trissall, *Public Men of Indiana. A Political History from 1860 to 1890* (Hammond, Ind., 1922), I, 146.

<sup>46</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 37 Cong., 2 sess., Appendix, 150 ff.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> Grace Julian Clark, *George W. Julian* (Indianapolis, 1923), 225.

<sup>49</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, March 2, 1862. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, May 16, 1862. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>52</sup> General David Hunter had been placed in command of the land forces on the coast of Georgia and South Carolina. On May 9, 1862, he issued a general order establishing martial law over South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, and declaring the slaves free in those areas. Lincoln revoked this proclamation on May 19, and declared that the government had had no part in it, and that neither General Hunter nor anyone else had received any authorization to issue such a proclamation, that it was void, and that he reserved to himself the exercise of any supposed power to declare slaves free. Channing, *op. cit.*, VI, 533.

<sup>53</sup> Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, March 2, 1862. Hamilton Collection.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Theodore Clarke Smith, *The Life and Letters of James Abram Garfield* (New Haven, 1925), I, 362.

<sup>57</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 38 Cong., 1 sess., 22.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 829.

<sup>59</sup> Gideon Welles, *Diary* (Boston and New York, 1911), I, 531.

<sup>60</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 38 Cong., 1 sess., 2431.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 2432.

<sup>62</sup> A thorough discussion of this question is found in James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850* (New York, 1909), V., 263 ff.

<sup>63</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 38 Cong., 1 sess., 286.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 38 Cong., 2 sess., 1258.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 1185 ff.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 1698.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 2035.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 2612, 2995.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 2960 ff.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 38 Cong., 2 sess., 217-19.

<sup>74</sup> W. S. Holman to Allen Hamilton, Washington, March 17, 1864. Lincoln Collection of the Lincoln Life Insurance Co., Fort Wayne, Ind.

## CHAPTER VI

<sup>1</sup> Smith, *The Life and Letters of Garfield*, I, 391.

<sup>2</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 38 Cong., 1 sess., 1063-66. See also the author's "Public Opinion Regarding President Johnson's Reconstruction Policy" (unpublished Master's thesis, Northwestern University, 1931).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 39 Cong., 2 sess., 320.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 40 Cong., 1 sess., 18.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 sess., 1353.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 1400-10.

<sup>10</sup> Details of the trial are to be found in the *Supplement to The Cong. Globe*, 40 Cong., 2 sess.

<sup>11</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 40 Cong., 2 sess., 1135-36.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix, 143-44.

<sup>13</sup> *House Journal*, 40 Cong., 2 sess., 305.

<sup>14</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 3 sess., 1364. This whole subject is treated at great length in Marianne Weiss, *The Movement to End Land Grants to the Railroads* (Master's thesis in mimeograph form, Cornell University, 1939). Also in David Maldwyn Ellis, *The Forfeiture of Railroad Land Grants* (Master's thesis in mimeograph form, Cornell University, 1939). Both theses were lent to the author by the Cornell University Library.

<sup>15</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 40 Cong., 3 sess., 424.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 sess., 258 ff.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 sess., Appendix, 184 ff.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 41 Cong., 2 sess., 4235.

<sup>19</sup> *Cong. Record*, 43 Cong., 1 sess., Appendix, 5315.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix, 182 ff.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 44 Cong., 1 sess., 5225.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix, 192 ff.

<sup>23</sup> *Biographical History*, 35-36.

<sup>24</sup> Aurora (Ind.), correspondent of the Cincinnati *Enquirer*, May 8, 1868, Holman Collection.

<sup>25</sup> Smith, *The Life and Letters of Garfield*, I, 419.

<sup>26</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 41 Cong., 2 sess., Appendix, 184ff., giving the Report of the Committee on the Decline of American Commerce.



- <sup>27</sup> Newspaper clipping, in Holman Collection, n. d.
- <sup>28</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 41 Cong., 2 sess., 828.
- <sup>29</sup> Newspaper clipping, Holman Collection.
- <sup>30</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 41 Cong., 2 sess., 2361-62.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix, 310 ff.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 sess., Appendix, 90-94.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 42 Cong., 2 sess., 1305-06.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 1695.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 1721.
- <sup>36</sup> William Rowe, President of the Land Reform Club of Hudson County, New Jersey, to Holman, Jersey City, N. J., March 21, 1872. Holman Collection.
- <sup>37</sup> Amos Sanford to Holman, Columbus, Kansas, March 23, 1872. Holman Collection.
- <sup>38</sup> H. Beeny to Holman, New York City, March 20, 1872. Holman Collection.
- <sup>39</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 41 Cong., 3 sess., 1428.
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 1516-17. An analysis of the passage of the bill in both branches of Congress is found at length in Catherine Coffin Phillips, *Cornelius Cole, California Pioneer and United States Senator* (San Francisco, 1929), 158-230. In 1865, Cole was chairman of the Select Committee in the House, and was largely responsible for the original grants of land to the Pacific Railroads. He was long a close personal friend of the "Big Four"—Collis P. Huntington, Leland Stanford, Charles Crocker and Mark Hopkins. Later, he was chairman of the important Senate Committee on Appropriations. Oliver P. Morton of Indiana and William P. Fessenden of Ohio co-operated with Cole in the passage of the Goat Island bill.
- <sup>41</sup> *Cong. Record*, 43 Cong., 2 sess., 279.
- <sup>42</sup> Paul W. Gates, "The Homestead Law in an Incongruous Land System," in *American Historical Review*, XLI, 652-81. This whole subject is dealt with in William Robert Stevenson, *The Movement for Reform of the Public Land Policies, 1862-1891* (Master's thesis, Cornell University, 1939), lent by Cornell University Library.
- <sup>43</sup> *Cong. Record*, 44 Cong., 1 sess., 2603.
- <sup>44</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 41 Cong., 3 sess., 758-60.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 1246-47.
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 42 Cong., 1 sess., Appendix, 257 ff.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>49</sup> William S. Holman, *Capital and Labor, An address before the Alumni of Franklin College, Indiana, on June 20, 1871* (pamphlet, Washington, D. C., 1871).
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>51</sup> Smith, *Life and Letters of Garfield*, I, 482-83.
- <sup>52</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 42 Cong., 2 sess., 420-23.
- <sup>53</sup> William Dunlap to Holman, Elizabethtown, Ind., [month not indicated] 20th., 1872. Original spelling. Holman Collection.

- <sup>54</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 42 Cong., 2 sess., 2585.
- <sup>55</sup> Smith, *Life and Letters of Garfield*, II, 791.
- <sup>56</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*
- <sup>57</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 42 Cong., 2 sess., 1054.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 1168-71.
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 3662.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 sess., 412.
- <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 42 Cong., 3 sess., Appendix, 157.
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>64</sup> Newspaper clipping, Holman Collection.
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>66</sup> *Cong. Record*, 43 Cong., 1 sess., 273-74. In December, 1875, the obnoxious law was repealed, so far as it related to the members of Congress. While it is clear that Holman had received a "certificate of deposit" for the amount which he returned to the treasury, the author has been unable to find any account for the final disposition of this certificate.
- <sup>67</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 42 Cong., 2 sess., Appendix, 334 ff.
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 sess., 11.
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 1828.
- <sup>72</sup> W. T. Pate to Holman, Patriot, Ind., March 18, 1872. Holman Collection.
- <sup>73</sup> James Roberts to Holman, Madison, Ind., April 21, 1872. Holman Collection.
- <sup>74</sup> David Henry to Holman, Pleasant P.O., Ind., March 25, 1872. Holman Collection.
- <sup>75</sup> Taylor, *Biographical Sketches*, 357.
- <sup>76</sup> *Cong. Record*, 43 Cong., 1 sess., 74.
- <sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 179.
- <sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 4647.
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 43 Cong., 2 sess., 286.
- <sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 43 Cong., 1 sess., Appendix, 137 ff.
- <sup>81</sup> Smith, *Life and Letters of Garfield*, I, 588.
- <sup>82</sup> Taylor, *Biographical Sketches*, 528-30.
- <sup>83</sup> *Cong. Record*, 44 Cong., 1 sess., 167.
- <sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 251. When Randall was elected to the Speakership on December 4, 1876, to succeed Michael C. Kerr, deceased, Holman automatically became chairman of the Committee on Appropriations.
- <sup>85</sup> Quoted in Smith, *Life and Letters of Garfield*, I, 590.
- <sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 592.
- <sup>87</sup> *Cong. Record*, 44 Cong., 1 sess., 227, 447.
- <sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.
- <sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 703.
- <sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 922.
- <sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 sess., 466.



<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 sess., 1867-69, 1961.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 2267.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 sess., 206, 241.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.* 1216. Holman had been defeated in 1876, partly due to the redistricting of the state, and he declared that his constituency was now "the largest Republican district in the State of Indiana." *Cong. Record*, 44 Cong., 2 sess., 1218.

<sup>96</sup> *Cong. Record*, 44 Cong., 1 sess., 3854.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 566-67, 635.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 sess., Appendix, 259 ff.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 sess., 1946.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 sess., 752.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-7

<sup>102</sup> Allen Nevins, *Abram S. Hewitt* (New York, 1935), 351.

<sup>103</sup> A good analysis of the position taken by Holman and other Democrats during Reconstruction is found in Albert V. House, Jr., "Northern Congressional Democrats as Defenders of the South During Reconstruction," *The Journal of Southern History*, VI, 46-71. It appears to the author, however, that the title of House's paper is somewhat misleading.

<sup>104</sup> *Memorial Addresses, op. cit.*, speech of Mr. Zenor, 19.

## CHAPTER VII

<sup>1</sup> *Cong. Record*, 44 Cong., 2 sess., 1218.

<sup>2</sup> Newspaper clipping, Indianapolis *Sentinel*, August 2, 1875. Holman Collection.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Stoll, *op. cit.*, 265-66.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 266-67.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 274.

<sup>7</sup> Newspaper clipping. Holman Collection.

<sup>8</sup> Stoll, *op. cit.*, 279.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 285, 290.

<sup>10</sup> Newspaper clipping. Holman Collection.

<sup>11</sup> J. K. H. Willcox, 206 Broadway, New York, to Holman, October 16, 1880. Holman Collection.

<sup>12</sup> W. G. Williams to Holman, Cincinnati, Oct. 14, 1880. Holman Collection. Williams was a member of the law firm of Jordan, Jordan and Williams.

<sup>13</sup> *Cong. Record*, 47 Cong., 1 sess., 238.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 419, 607, 1464.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 3233, 3802, 4808-09, 5356.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 3489.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 5744.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 sess., 2949.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 48 Cong., 1 sess., 1992.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 50 Cong., 1 sess., 1353, 8749. Discussions relating to the new

Library continued until 1897, when the Library of Congress was removed from the Capitol to a home of its own, at a cost of \$6,500,000. By 1935, however, it was found that the new building was too small, and a large Annex has been constructed.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 47 Cong., 2 sess., 1565.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 49 Cong., 1 sess., Appendix, 96-99.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 51 Cong., 1 sess., Appendix, 175.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 52 Cong., 1 sess., Appendix, 409.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 47 Cong., 1 sess., 4764.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 48 Cong., 1 sess., 3191.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 47 Cong., 1 sess., 6013.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 1769.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 48 Cong., 2 sess., 1769.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 47 Cong., 1 sess., 5293.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 5294.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 49 Cong., 1 sess., 5164.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 47 Cong., 1 sess., 5306.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 48 Cong., 1 sess., 220, 223, 3076.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 906, Appendix, 13 ff.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 3366-67, 5816.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 1920-21.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 3987.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 5975, 5980.

<sup>41</sup> New York *Sun*, Sept. 17, 1883. Lent by Mr. Cornelius O'Brien.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, A copy of the New York *Sun*, Sept. 17, 1883, was sent to Mr. O'Brien by Miss Esther U. McNutt, late Chief, Indiana Division, Indiana State Library, January 27, 1936, from which the poem and the other articles were copied.

<sup>43</sup> Newspaper clipping lent to author by Mrs. Fred Harvey.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> New York *Sun*, Jan. 22, 1884. Clipping lent to author by Mrs. Harvey.

<sup>47</sup> Elsewhere on the editorial page, the Lawrenceburg, Indiana, *Register* Oct. 25, 1883 (lent by Miss Abigail Holman) gave excerpts from papers throughout the country, with a view to showing to its readers the hold Judge Holman had upon the people of the country as expressed in the leading journals outside of his own district. The Vincennes (Ind.) *Sun* declared: "Every now and then an Eastern paper gives Mr. Holman a very nice compliment. He has a great many admirers scattered over the country." The Columbia City (Ind.) *Herald* said that the mention of Holman for the presidency called forth a bitter howl from the Republicans. "He has objected to so many of their thriving appropriation bills that they detest him above all other Democrats." John B. Stoll said in the South Bend (Ind.) *Times* that Holman was growing steadily in the popular affection. The Utica (N.Y.) *Observer* remarked that his avail-



ability would be seriously considered. The La Porte (Ind.) *Argus* doubted if the Republicans had a ghost of a chance, if Holman were the nominee. It was believed by the *Boone County* (Ky.) *Recorder* that Holman's record could not be assailed, "and no doubt he would be as watchful of the public's interest were he in the White House as he had been while in the national councils."

The New Albany *Ledger Standard* declared that the politicians generally objected to Holman "because he has objected to so many of their schemes, but it is doubtful if a man has been yet mentioned for the presidency who would be stronger before the people" than Holman. Although unacquainted with Holman, the Logansport (Ind.) *Pharos* held his services "in high esteem." "If honesty is to be the leading factor in the coming election," declared the Washington (Ind.) *Sentinel*, "no stronger man can be put forward by any party. . . . Uncle Sam's coffers would be safe if our old friend should ever get the reins into his hands." The Wabash (Ind.) *Courier* remarked: "There is a principle of reform attaching to the name of William S. Holman that makes him aside from Mr. Hendricks, the most formidable Indianian yet mentioned for the Presidency."

The San Francisco (Cal.) *Examiner* urged Judge Holman for the presidency, because he had made quite a favorable impression on the Pacific Coast, through his opposition to monopolies. Both the Chicago (Ill.) *Herald* and the Chicago *Times* supported Holman. The Michigan City (Ind.) *Dispatch* declared: "If Tilden absolutely refuses to accept the presidential nomination," there was no tangible reason why Holman would not be "about the right man for the position, providing Mr. Hendricks cannot secure the prize." The Shelby (Ind.) *Volunteer* declared that Holman was "the very man for the times," and in the executive chair "will be worth more to this people than can be computed in dollars and cents."

Holman was praised by the Boston (Mass.) *Globe* for his record in Congress, especially concerning the land grants to corporations. The Philadelphia (Pa.) *Times* said that "when the people get their lanterns out and begin to search for an honest man, its rays are certain to fall upon Mr. Holman and bring him to the front again and again." It asserted that "every year he spends in Congress he saves his weight in gold over and over again."

<sup>48</sup> New York *Star*, Dec. 30, 1883. Lent by Mrs. Harvey.

<sup>49</sup> Cincinnati *News-Journal*, Jan. 12, 1884. Clipping lent by Mrs. Harvey.

<sup>50</sup> Columbus, Ind., *Democrat*, Jan. 11, 1884. Lent by Mrs. Harvey.

<sup>51</sup> Newspaper clipping "To *The News*," from Lovelady, Texas, June 20, 1884. Lent by Mrs. Harvey.

<sup>52</sup> *Official Proceedings of the National Democratic Convention, 1884* (New York, 1884), 1-297, *passim*. Hendricks had been the candidate in 1876 with Tilden. This helped him much in 1884, when another reform governor of New York was at hand for the presidential nomination.

- <sup>53</sup> Newspaper clipping. Lent by Mrs. Harvey.
- <sup>54</sup> *Cong. Record*, 49 Cong., 1 sess., 1076.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 538.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 48 Cong., 2 sess., 2572.
- <sup>57</sup> L. White Busbey, *Uncle Joe Cannon, The Story of a Pioneer American* (New York, 1927), 341.
- <sup>58</sup> Orlando Oscar Stealey, *Twenty Years in the Press Gallery* (New York, 1906), 320.
- <sup>59</sup> Busbey, *op. cit.*, 341.
- <sup>60</sup> Stealey, *op. cit.*, 321. This incident, however, is not mentioned by Cannon's biographer.
- <sup>61</sup> Manuscript in handwriting of Holman, labeled "Indian Affairs," written on House of Representatives stationery. Lent by Mrs. Emerine Rees.
- <sup>62</sup> *Cong. Record*, 49 Cong., 1 sess., 3198.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 4166.
- <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 51 Cong., 2 sess., 129.
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 2818-20. In the fifty-third Congress, in 1893, Holman was made chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, and he blocked many selfish schemes favored by dishonest Indian agents and land-grabbers. *Ibid.*, 53 Cong., 1 sess., 554.
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 49 Cong., 1 sess., 5424-25.
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 4702.
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix, 275.
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 50 Cong., 1 sess., 2194.
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 5428-29.
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 5627.
- <sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 5912, 7179.
- <sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 49 Cong., 1 sess., Appendix, 343.
- <sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 sess., Appendix, 149.
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix, 150.
- <sup>76</sup> Holman to Will H. O'Brien, Washington, D. C., Dec. 25, 1887 (marked "Private and confidential.") O'Brien Collection.
- <sup>77</sup> *Cong. Record*, 50 Cong., 1 sess., 280.
- <sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 5339, 7890.
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 1067, 2674, 6824.
- <sup>80</sup> James E. Watson, *As I Knew Them* (Indianapolis, 1936), 21; Champ Clark, *My Quarter Century of American Politics* (New York, 1920,) II, 56; newspaper clipping, lent by Mrs. Harvey.
- <sup>81</sup> Adlai E. Stevenson, *Something of Men I have Known* (Chicago, 1909), 35, relates the story.
- <sup>82</sup> *Cong. Record*, 50 Cong., 1 sess., Appendix, 457.
- <sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 sess., Appendix, 170, 172.
- <sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 51 Cong., 1 sess., 1700, 1183.
- <sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 50 Cong., 1 sess., Appendix, 224.
- <sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 sess., Appendix, 77.
- <sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 51 Cong., 1 sess., 379.



- <sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 2278, 3373, 3562, Appendix, 61.
- <sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 3439-40.
- <sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 1208.
- <sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix, 392.
- <sup>92</sup> Holman to W. H. O'Brien, Washington, Dec. 7, 1890. O'Brien Collection.
- <sup>93</sup> Same to Same, Washington, July 18, 1890. O'Brien Collection.
- <sup>94</sup> *Cong. Record*, 51 Cong., 1 sess., 6843.
- <sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 sess., 2353.
- <sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 52 Cong., 1 sess., Appendix, 543.
- <sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 3233, 3433, 5482.
- <sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 sess., 1561.
- <sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 51 Cong., 2 sess., 1551.
- <sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 547-48.
- <sup>101</sup> Holman to W. H. O'Brien, Washington, March 6, 1891. O'Brien Collection.
- <sup>102</sup> *Cong. Record*, 52 Cong., 1 sess., 7.
- <sup>103</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, I, 272.
- <sup>104</sup> *Cong. Record*, 52 Cong., 1 sess., 103.
- <sup>105</sup> Holman to W. H. O'Brien, Washington, Jan. 11, 1892. O'Brien Collection.
- <sup>106</sup> *Cong. Record*, 41 Cong., 2 sess., 4370.
- <sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 43 Cong., 2 sess., Appendix, 33.
- <sup>108</sup> Holman to William H. O'Brien, Washington, April 5, 1890 (marked "Confidential"). O'Brien Collection.
- <sup>109</sup> *Cong. Record*, 52 Cong., 1 sess., 3970-74, 4026, 5803.
- <sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix, 571.
- <sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix, 544.
- <sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 sess., 94.
- <sup>113</sup> Holman to W. H. O'Brien, Washington, March 6, 1892. O'Brien Collection.
- <sup>114</sup> W. S. Holman, "Economy and the Democracy," *North American Review* (March, 1892,) CLIV, 328.
- <sup>115</sup> *Cong. Record*, 52 Cong., 1 sess., 5867. Holman's condemnation of Congress in this instance, however, is somewhat exaggerated.
- <sup>116</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, Sunday, February 12, 1893. Lent by Mrs. Rees.
- <sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, As a matter of fact, heavy expenditures under Harrison had exhausted the surplus, which process was aided by the poor results of the McKinley Tariff Act as a revenue producer.
- <sup>118</sup> *Cong. Record*, 53 Cong., 1 sess., 1759.
- <sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 sess., Appendix, 407.
- <sup>120</sup> *Cincinnati Enquirer*, July 29, 1894. O'Brien Collection.
- <sup>121</sup> Printed handbill. O'Brien Collection.
- <sup>122</sup> Watson, *op. cit.*, 21.
- <sup>123</sup> Stoll, *op. cit.*, 357.

<sup>124</sup> Watson, *op. cit.*, 21. The Riley referred to is James Whitcomb Riley, the Hoosier poet.

<sup>125</sup> Taylor, *op. cit.*, 537.

<sup>126</sup> Newspaper clipping. Lent by Mrs. Rees.

<sup>127</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, II, 56.

## CHAPTER VIII

<sup>1</sup> Newspaper clipping. Lent by Mrs. Emerine Rees, Aurora, Indiana.

<sup>2</sup> *Memorial Addresses, on the Life and Character of William Steele Holman* (Washington, 1898), 83.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>4</sup> Edward Stanwood, *A History of the Presidency from 1788 to 1897* (Boston, 1912), 526, *passim*.

<sup>5</sup> James E. Watson, who had defeated Holman in 1894, was unable to secure renomination in 1896.

<sup>6</sup> *The Tribune Almanac* (New York, 1897), 237-38; *Congressional Directory*, Extra Session, 55 Congress (Washington, 1897), 41.

<sup>7</sup> Stoll, *op. cit.*, 371.

<sup>8</sup> *Memorial Addresses, op. cit.*, 52.

<sup>9</sup> *Cong. Record*, 55 Cong., 1 sess., 104.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 79-80.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 559.

<sup>12</sup> Washington (D. C.) *Sentinel*, April 22, 1897.

<sup>13</sup> *Memorial Addresses, op. cit.*, 5, 104.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-8.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-142, *passim*. This volume contains the speeches of the various members of Congress during the memorial services conducted for Holman.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 86-91.

<sup>18</sup> Champ Clark, *op. cit.*, II, 56.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

<sup>20</sup> Washington (D. C.) *Sentinel*, April 22, 1897.

<sup>21</sup> Stealey, *op. cit.*, 320.

<sup>22</sup> Washington (D. C.) *Sentinel*, April 22, 1897.

<sup>23</sup> Washington (D. C.) *Post*, April 23, 1897.

<sup>24</sup> Letter from Mr. Harland D. Holman, Berkley, California, to Mr. Cornelius O'Brien, August 7, 1938.

<sup>25</sup> Washington (D. C.) *Post*, April 23, 1897.

<sup>26</sup> Stoll, *op. cit.*, 456.

<sup>27</sup> Washington (D. C.) *Sentinel*, April 22, 1897. Similar estimates of Holman's character were expressed by Mr. James E. Watson to the author, in an interview on July 9, 1940, in the former's office in Washington, D. C. Mr. Watson had only words of highest praise for his one-time political opponent, whom he affectionately called "Uncle Billy" and "Old Bill."



<sup>28</sup> Omar F. Roberts on editorial page of the Dearborn *Independent*, June 10, 1897, address delivered before the Dearborn County Bar Association, June 7, 1897. Courtesy of Miss Abigail Holman, of Aurora, Ind.

<sup>29</sup> Adlai E. Stevenson, *Something of Men I Have Known* (Chicago, 1909), 34.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>31</sup> Stealey, *op. cit.*, 319.

<sup>32</sup> James G. Blaine, *Twenty Years of Congress* (Norwich, Conn., 1884), I, 329.

<sup>33</sup> Washington (D. C.) *Post*, April 23, 1897.

<sup>34</sup> *Memorial Addresses, op. cit.*, 127 *passim*.

<sup>35</sup> Letter from Mr. Harland D. Holman to Mr. Cornelius O'Brien, August 7, 1938.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> As told to author by Miss Abigail Holman, Aurora, Ind.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Letter from Mr. Harland D. Holman to Mr. Cornelius O'Brien, August 7, 1938.

<sup>40</sup> I. K. Lee to Holman, St. Maurice, Ind., March 20, 1890. Lent by Mrs. Emerine Rees, Aurora, Ind.

<sup>41</sup> *Dictionary of American Biography*. IX, 158. Sketch by W. A. Robinson.

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## INDEX





## INDEX

- Abolition, see Slavery  
 Abolitionists, 54  
 Adams, Charles Francis, 71  
 Adams, John Quincy, 20-21, 28  
 Alabama Claims, 154  
 Alaska, 156  
 Alden, Lucius (Rev.), 34  
 American Colonization Society, 28  
 American Library Association, 179  
 American Revolution, 5  
 American Sabbath Union, 38  
 Ames, Oakes, 161-62  
 Anderson, Robert, (Major), 88, 96  
 Antietam, Battle of, 119  
 Anti-Holman Clubs, 216-18  
 Anti-Monopoly Party, 194  
 Appomatox Court House, 127  
 Army Medical Museum, 182  
 Arthur, Chester A., 182-83  
 Ashley, James M., 130-31  
 Astoria (Ore.), 143  
 Aurora (Ind.), 6, 32-39, 43-44, 77, 82, 91, 92, 141, 221, 225  
 Aurora Association for Internal Improvements, 33  
 Aurora Church, 37, 39  
 Aurora Seminary, 34  
  
 Ball, Robert C., 176  
 Baltimore (Maryland), 81, 82  
 Banks, Nathaniel P., 162  
 Baptist, 4, 36, 39, 40, 41  
 Baptist Church, 86, 221, 229  
 Baptist Manual Labor Institute, see Franklin College  
 Bardstown (Ky.), 3-4  
 Bartholomew, Daniel, 17  
 Bartholomew, Joseph, 15  
 Bassett, Horace, 16, 21, 26, 27, 32, 34, 36  
  
 Bayard, Thomas F., 193  
 Bayfield (Wis.), 145  
 Beck, James B., 162  
 Bell, John, 82  
 Bible and Tract Societies, 26, 39  
 Bickle, W. A., 174  
 Biddle, Horace P., 47  
 Bingham, John A., 134  
 Bismarck (N. D.), 196  
 Blackford, Isaac (Judge), 14, 17, 20, 21, 27, 32, 35, 48, 60  
 Blaine, James G., 132, 137, 138, 162, 166, 194, 230  
 Blair, Francis P., Jr., 122  
 Blake, Thomas H., 15, 24, 25  
 Bland, Luke P., 162  
 Board of Trade, Indianapolis, 202  
 Board of Trustees, Indiana University, 41  
 Board of Visitors, Indiana College, 41  
 Bocock, Thomas S., 73  
 Bookwalter, Addison, 81  
 Boon, Ratliff, 15, 20, 26  
 Boston (Mass.), 34, 108  
 Boutwell, George S., 134  
 Brady, Peter, 28  
 Brandywine Church, 40  
 Breckinridge, John C., 81, 83-84  
 British in U. S., 1  
 Bright, Jesse D., 70-71, 76, 81, 95  
 Bright, Michael G., 47  
 Brown, Austin H., 176  
 Brown, James T., 69  
 Brown, John, 77  
 Browne, Thomas M., 176  
 Bryan, William Jennings, 222-23  
 Buchanan, James (Pres.), 71, 81, 87-88, 94-95, 112, 122, 123, 137  
 Buckner, Simon B., (Gen.), 223



- Bullitt's Lick (Ky.), 3-4  
 Bull Run, Battle of, 98  
 Burlington and Missouri Railroad, 109  
 Butler, Benjamin F., 96, 194  
 Butler, William O. (Gen.), 6  
  
 Cairo (Ill.), 108  
 Calhoun, John C., 23, 78  
 Cameron, Simon B., 102-106, 108  
 Cannon, Joseph C., 195-96, 206, 224  
 Carlisle, John G., 179, 185, 187, 194-95, 202, 206  
 Carnegie Steel Co., 213  
 Carr, George W., 47-48  
 Carr, Thomas, 15  
 Carrollton (Ky.), 6  
 Cass, Lewis, 6  
 Castle Pinckney, 88  
 Centennial of American Independence, 170  
 Central Pacific Railroad Co., 147  
 Channing, Edward, 102  
 Chapman, Jacob Page, 47  
 Charleston (S. C.), 81, 82, 86  
 Charleston Harbor, 88, 95  
 Charlestown (Ind.), 35  
 Chicago (Ill.), 103, 108, 208-09, 223  
 Choate, Rufus, 11  
 Churches, 36  
 Cincinnati (O.), 7, 33, 108  
 Cincinnati *Enquirer*, 217-18  
 Cincinnati *Gazette*, 159  
 Cincinnati *News Sentinel*, 192  
 Circuit rider judge, 13  
 Circuit court, 10  
 Civil Service Commission, 182  
 Civil War, 78, 90, 96, 98-127, 142, 156, 173, 183, 201, 213  
 Clark, Champ, 220, 227-28  
 Clark County (Ind.), 12, 15-16, 20, 35  
 Clark, William, 2  
 Clay, Henry, 5, 20, 24-25  
 Claypool, Benjamin F., 165  
 Cleveland, Grover, 193-94, 198, 199, 201, 205, 214-15  
 "Cleveland Panic," 218  
 Colfax, Schuyler, 47, 71  
 Columbia Hospital for Women and Lying-In Asylum, 185  
 Columbus (Ind.), *Democrat*, 192  
 Columbia (S. C.), 86  
 Columbian International Exposition of 1892, 208-09  
 Committee on Reconstruction, 129  
 Confederacy, 93, 120-21  
 Confederates, 95-96  
*Congressional Record*, 171, 190  
 Connersville (Ind.), 20  
 Conklin, Roscoe, 71  
 Conservatives, 129  
 Constitution of Indiana of 1816, 14-15, 17-18  
 Constitutional Convention of 1850, 45-59  
 Constitutional Union Party, 82  
 Corydon (Ind.), 12-14, 20, 23  
 Court of Common Pleas, 12  
 Courthouses, 11  
 Courts, early state, 56-58  
 Cox, S. S. ("Sunset"), 71, 119, 128, 162, 166, 206  
 Cravens, John O., 176, 194  
 Credit Mobilier, 161, 162  
 Crisp, Charles F., 210, 215  
 Crittenden, John, 90  
 Crittenden Compromise, 90-91, 93, 95, 99  
 "Cross of Gold" speech, 222  
 Cumback, Will, 70  
 Cummings, Alexander (Dr.), 104-05  
 Cushing, Caleb, 154  
 "Czar" Reed, see Thomas B. Reed  
  
 Danville (Ky.), 2  
 Dana, Charles A., 188-90  
 Davis, Jefferson, 78, 93, 96  
 Dawes Act, 197  
 Dearborn County (Ind.), 6, 10, 12-13, 15, 17, 20, 27, 32, 35-36, 44-45, 48, 53, 70, 193, 226

- Dearborn County Bar Association, 229  
 Decatur, original name of Aurora, Ind., 32-34  
 Decatur Bridge Co., 32  
 Declaration of Independence, 14  
 Democrats, 45, 47, 58, 70-74, 77-83, 95-96, 98, 110-11, 119, 124, 130, 146, 151, 165, 172, 174, 208, 210, 212, 215-19, 222-23  
 Detroit *Times*, 191  
 Dill, James (Gen.), 10, 33  
 Dillon, John (quoted), 14  
 Diplomatic and Consular Appropriation Bill, 167  
 District of Columbia, 90, 178  
 Dobbins, Samuel A., 190  
 Douglas, Stephen A., 70-71, 76, 79, 81-82, 84, 96, 135  
 Dow, Lorenzo, 36  
 Downey, Alexander C. (Judge), 176  
 Dred Scott Case, 71, 80, 81  
 Dufour, John, 3  
 Duluth (Minn.), 145  
 Dumont, Ebenezer, 69  
 Dumont, John, 15, 69  
 Dunn, George H., 29  
 Dunn, Isaac, 12-13, 27  
 Dunn, William M., 47  
 Dunning, Paris C., 46  
 Dupont Circle, Washington, D. C., 224  
 Eagle Hotel, 7  
 Eleventh Census of 1890, 207  
 Emancipation, 114, 116  
 Emancipation Proclamation, 119  
 English, William E., 187  
 English, William H., 48, 65, 71, 187  
 Erie Canal, 113  
*Errors of Education*, 5  
 Esarey, Logan, 59  
 Fairbanks, Charles W., 223  
 Farnham, John H., 24, 35  
 "Federalism," 208  
 Ferris, Ezra, 15  
 Ferry, John H., 91  
 Fifteenth Amendment, 172  
 Fisher, D. W. (Dr.), 224  
 Fletcher, Leslie, 45  
 Fletcher, Mrs. R. E., see Rhoda Elizabeth Holman  
 Flower, R. P., 191  
 Floyd, Davis, 15  
 Foley, James B. (Gen.), 176  
 Forsythe, William, 31  
 Fort Lincoln, 196  
 Fort Moultrie, 88  
 Fort Niagara, 6  
 Fort Pickens, 95  
 Fort Riley, 197  
 Fort Sumter, 88, 95-96  
 Fort Wayne, 18, 24-25, 39, 41, 91, 176  
 Fort Yates, 196  
 Fourteenth Amendment, 150-52, 172  
 Frankfort (Ky.), 6  
 Franklin (Ind.), 40-41, 44  
 Franklin College, 40-41, 44, 152-53  
 Franklin County (Ind.), 13  
 Franking privilege, 143  
 "Fraud of 1876," 172  
 Free Coinage of Silver, 208, 222-23  
 Freeport Doctrine, 78  
 Fugitive Slave Law, 117  
 Garfield, James A., 122, 154, 164, 166, 171, 177  
 German, Indiana Constitution printed in, 59  
 German Sunday School, 219  
 Gibson County (Ind.), 15  
 Gibson, John, 2  
 Goat Island, 147  
 Golden Gate, 227  
 Gordon, Jane, see Mrs. Henry Holeman  
 Gordon, John, 3  
 Gordon, Polly, 3  
 Grant, Ulysses S. (Gen.), 130, 141,



- 150, 160, 169, 181  
 Gray, Isaac P. (Col.), 176  
 Great Britain, Boundary dispute with, 154  
 Great Miami River, 33  
 "Great Objector," see William S. Holman  
 Greeley, Horace, 191  
 Greenbackers, 194  
 Greensburg (Ind.), 176  
 Griffin, John, 2  
 Grow, Galusha A., 71, 73
- Hall, Philip A., 103  
 Halleck, Henry W. (Gen.), 118  
 Hamilton, Allen, 7-8, 18, 24-26, 27, 39, 41-42, 78, 84, 91, 108, 117  
 Hamilton, Andrew J., 73  
 Hancock, Winfield Scott (Gen.), 177  
 Hanover College, 224  
 Harper's Ferry, 71, 76  
 Harrisburgh (Pa.), 108  
 Harrison, Benjamin, 176, 210  
 Harrison, Christopher, 14, 18, 20  
 Harrison County (Ind.), 12  
 Harrison, William Henry, 1, 10, 202-03  
 Harvey, Frederick, 45  
 Harvey, Mrs. Frederick, see Pamela Holman  
 Hatch, William, 210  
 Hayes, Caleb, 32  
 Hayes, Rutherford B., 171, 176  
 Haynes, John D., 69  
 Helper, Hinton Rowan, 72  
 Henderson, Richard, 23  
 Hendricks, Thomas A., 47, 163, 176, 193, 194  
 Hendricks, William, 14, 15, 17, 20, 27  
 Hennepin Canal, 211  
 Henry County (Ky.), 3  
 Herod, William Wirt, 163  
 Hewitt, Abram S., 172  
 Historical Society of Indiana, 35  
 Hobart, Garret A., 222
- Hogan Creek, 7, 32, 33  
 Hogan, Edward, 15  
 Holeman, Henry, 2, 4  
 Holeman, Jane Gordon (Mrs. Henry Holeman), 3  
 Holman, Abigail Knapp (Mrs. William S. Holman), 45, 221  
 Holman, Edward, 3  
 Holman, Eliza, 18, 42  
 Holman, Elizabeth Masterson (Mrs. Jesse L. Holman), 6, 18, 35, 42, 44  
 Holman, Emerine (Mrs. Allen Hamilton), 5, 18, 27, 41-42  
 Holman, George, 3, 22  
 Holman, Henry, 4  
 Holman, Jesse Lynch,—  
 home, 1; birth and family, 2, 3; schooling, 4; teacher, 4; preacher, 4; law training, 4-5; religious life, 4; writer, 5; marriage, 6; pioneer, 7-10; home, 8; prosecuting attorney, 10-12; licensed lawyer, 10; member of territorial legislature, 12; legislative councillor, president of council, 12; judge of second and third judicial districts, 12-13; commissioner, 13; candidate for senator, 15; presidential elector, 15; judge of state supreme court, 15, 16; slave case decision, 17; re-appointed judge, 17; family, 18; candidate for governor, 18-20; loses as judge of state supreme court, 21-22; semi-retirement, 23; defeated for senate, 23-26; renewed license, 27; seeks and receives federal district judgeship, 27-31; attitude on slavery, 28-29; visit to Washington, 30; stagecoach accident, 30; death, 31; memorials, 31-32; incorporator for bridge, 32; town of Aurora, 33-34; religious and educational activities, 34-41; Indiana Historical Society, 35; ordained, 37; Sabbath Schools, 38-

- 39; state Baptist convention, 40; Franklin College, 40; Indiana University, 41; characteristics, 41-42; death, 42-43.
- Holman, Jesse Lynch, Jr., 42, 83
- Holman, Joseph, 3, 22
- Holman, Lucy, 42
- Holman, Mary Anne, 42
- Holman, Maude, 45
- Holman, Pamela (Mrs. Frederick Harvey), 45, 224
- Holman, Paul, 45, 224
- Holman, Rhoda Elizabeth (Mrs. Leslie Fletcher), 45, 224
- "Holman Resolution," 166
- Holman, Richard, 26, 42
- Holman, William Steele,—
- home, 1, 8; family, 42, 44-45; birth, 43; early life, 43; schooling, 44; teacher, 44; studied law, 44; probate judge, 44; prosecuting attorney, 44; lawyer, 45; delegate to state convention, 45-50; work in convention, 50-58; influence in the convention, 60; member of the General Assembly, 60; Judiciary Committee and General Assembly of 1852, 60-64; speech at anniversary of the convention of 1850, 65-67; judge of common pleas court, 67; characteristics, 67-69; nominated and defeated for representative in Congress, 70-71; Kansas-Nebraska bill, 71; elected to Congress, 71; attitude toward national slavery questions, 72; vote for Speaker, 72-75; attitude on slavery and secession, 75; Republican Party, 75-77; defense of Dred Scott decision, 80-81; reelected to Congress, 81-84; views on Lincoln's election, 84-86; views on Ordinance of Secession, 86-89; Crittenden Compromise, 90-91; Confederacy, 93-95; Civil War, 95-96; claims, 97; Civil War again, 98-127; taxes, 98; public lands, 101-02; frauds, 102-09; attitude toward soldiers, 112; diplomatic corps, 113; appropriations, 112-13; emancipation, 114-16; re-elected to Congress, 119; attitude toward South, 120; attitude toward expenditures, 120-22; Indians, 123; land grants, 124; thirteenth amendment, 124; out of Congress, 128-29; re-elected to Congress, 130; impeachment of Johnson, 131-34; economy of government, 134; homesteads, 135-37; national debt, 137; banking and taxation, 138-41; elections of 1868, 141; free trade, tariff and subsidies, 142-43; franking system, 143; land grant and bounties, 143-50; income tax, 150; election of 1870, 150; disorders in South, 151; speech at Franklin College, 152-54; Canadian boundary dispute, 154-55; appropriations, 154-60; civil service, 160-63; proposed as candidate for governor, 163; election of 1872, 163; more appropriations, 164; election of 1874, 164; reduction of expenditures, 166-71; election of 1876, 172; proposed as candidate for governor, 175; defeated for re-election to Congress, 176; re-elected, 177; appropriations, for Library of Congress, surveys, navy, civil service, seeds, medical museum, 178-83; revenue, 183-85; election of 1882, 185; post office appropriations, pensions, centennials, 185-87; mentioned as presidential possibility, 188-93; election of 1884, 194; mentioned for Cabinet, 194; investigation into Indian affairs, 195-97; Indian affairs, 197-98; appropriations and subsidies, 199; land grants, 199-201; treasury



- surplus, 201; session of 1887, 202-04; Indian Territory, 204; tariff, 205; Nicaraguan Canal, 206; election of 1888, 206; foreigners and land policy, 206-07; discussion of increased representation, 209-10; Appropriation Committee, 210; public works, 211; contract system *vs.* system of credit, 212; writer on public expenditures, 212; strikes, 213; big business, 213; illness, 214; champion of weak, 214-16; election and defeat of 1894, 216-20; death of Mrs. Holman, 221; election of 1896, 221-23; "father of the House," 223; duty-free educational books, 224; death, 224-26; appreciation and character, 225-32
- Holman, William Steele, Jr., 45, 224
- Homestead (Pa.), 222
- Homestead Law, 101, 124, 148
- Hoover, David, 23
- Hoover, Henry, 45
- Horner, Gustavus B., 97
- Hovey, Alvin P., 47
- Hunter Proclamation, 118
- Illinois Central Railroad, 109, 124, 135
- Illinois River, 211
- Impending Crisis, The*, 72
- Income Tax, 150
- Indian affairs, 224
- Indian Bureau, 224
- Indiana Baptist Convention, 40
- Indiana Baptist Education Society, 40-41
- Indiana Bible Society, 38
- Indiana College, *see* Indiana University
- Indiana Historical Society, 35
- Indiana Manual Labor Institute, *see* Franklin College
- Indianapolis (Ind.), 24, 25, 28, 31, 35, 37, 40, 48, 61, 65, 81, 159, 174, 176, 194, 203, 214, 223
- Indianapolis *Journal*, 47
- Indiana Territory, 2, 6-7, 9-10, 13, 17, 28
- Indiana University, 41
- Indians, 1-6, 39, 123
- Interstate Commerce Act of 1887, 201-02
- Jackson, Andrew, 20, 22-28, 30-31, 58, 145, 229
- Japan, 156, 157
- Jefferson County (Ind.), 12-13
- Jefferson, Thomas, 186, 229, 232
- Jeffersonian, 220
- Jeffersonville (Ind.), 24
- Jennings, Jonathan, 14-16, 18, 20
- Jersey City (N. J.), 147
- Joint High Commission, 171-72
- Johnson, Andrew, 128-31, 133-34
- Johnson, John, 16
- Jones, John, 23-24
- Judiciary system of Indiana, 10
- Julian, George W., 45, 117, 122, 134
- Juries of early Indiana, 11
- Kansas-Nebraska bill, 71, 76-77, 81
- Kayser, "Uncle Charley," 219
- Keller, Henry, 219
- Kelley, James, 122
- Kelley, William D. ("Pig-Iron"), 206
- Kelso, Daniel, 47, 69
- Kerr, Michael C., 166, 171
- Kilgore, David, 47
- Knapp, Miss Abigail, *see* Mrs. William S. Holman
- Know-Nothing Party, 70, 73-74
- Knox County (Ind.), 20, 35
- Lake Michigan, 211
- Lake of the Woods, 154
- Lake Superior, 145
- Land Policy, 101-02, 124, 135-37, 143-50, 199-201, 204
- Land Reform Association of New

- Jersey, 147  
 Land Reform Association of New York, 147  
 Land Reform League of Kansas, 147  
 Landers, Franklin, 174-76  
 Lane, Amos, 15, 22, 27-28, 69  
 Lasselle, Colonel, 16  
 Laughery Baptist Association, 39  
 Lawrence County (Ind.), 48  
 Lawrenceburg (Ind.), 7-8, 91, 211-12, 218  
 Lawrenceburg *Press*, 193  
 Lawrenceburg *Register*, 73, 83, 192  
 Lee, Robert E. (Gen.), 119, 127  
*Leslie's Weekly*, 103  
 Levenworth, S. M., 24  
 Lexington (Ky.), 5, 32  
 Library, establishment of, in Aurora, 34  
 Library of Congress, 179  
 Liberia, 28-29  
 Liberty (Ind., Union County), 177  
 Ligonier (Ind.) *Banner*, 175  
 Lincoln, Abraham, 71, 82, 84-88, 95, 98-99, 101, 106, 108, 109, 112, 114, 118-19, 121-22, 124, 126, 128-29, 167, 223-26, 232  
 Linton, William C., 35  
 Liquor, 209  
 Lodge, Henry Cabot, 208  
 Logan, John A., 71, 76, 134, 194  
 Logansport (Ind.), 15, 21  
 Los Angeles (Calif.), *Times*, 214  
 Louisiana Territory, 76  
 Louisville (Ky.), 3, 74  
 Louisville Canal, 211  
  
 McCarty, Jonathan, 22, 26, 27  
 McClernand, John A., 73  
 McCoy, John, 35  
 McCoy, Isaac, 35, 39  
 McCoy, William, 35  
 McCrary bill, 164  
 McCrary, George W., 162  
 McKinley tariff, 208  
 McKinley, William, 206, 222, 223  
 McKinney, John T., 22, 27  
 McLean, John (Justice), 31  
 McMillan, Benton, 213  
 McMinnville (Ore.), 143  
 McNamee, Elias, 15  
  
 Madison (Ind.), 163  
 Madison, James, 14, 20  
 Major, Daniel S., 69  
 Maritime Calan Co. of Nicaragua, 205  
 Martha's Vineyard, 227  
 Manual Labor Institute, see Franklin College  
 Manufacturing in Indiana, 2  
 Masonic Order, 24-25  
 Masterson, Elizabeth, see Mrs. Jesse L. Holman  
 Masterson, Richard M. (Judge), 6  
 Matson, C. C. (Col.), 176  
 Maxwell, David H., 20  
 Meikleham, David S., 186  
 Meikleham, Septimia Randolph, 186  
 Memphis and Vicksburg Railroad, 148  
 Metcalf, Thomas, P., 32  
 Mexican War of 1845-46, 6, 178  
 Miami River, 94  
 Milburn, Joseph E., 32  
 Mills bill, 205  
 Mills, Roger Q., 210  
 Millson, John S., 73  
*Minnesotian, The*, 145  
 Missions, 37, 39  
 Mississippi River, 145, 211  
 Mississippi and Lake Superior Railroad Co., 124  
 Mississippi and Missouri Railroad, 109  
 Missouri Compromise, 76, 90  
 Monroe County (Ind.), 21  
 Monroe, James, 15, 20  
 Montgomery (Ala.), 93  
 Morgan, Edwin Dennison (Gov. of N. Y.), 107  
 Morgan, John Hunt (Gen.), 114



- Morrill, Justin S., 71  
 Morrison, John I., 47  
 Mounds City (Ill.), 155  
 National Banking System, 138  
 National Capitol, 180  
 National Silver Party, 222  
 National debt, 137  
 New Castle (Ky.), 3, 6  
 New Haven (Conn.), 108  
 New Orleans (La.), 28  
 New York (N. Y.), 104, 108  
 New York (N. Y.) *Star*, 192  
 New York (N. Y.) *Sun*, 188, 190, 191, 194, 227  
 New York (N. Y.) *World*, 95, 105  
 Niblack, William E., 71, 73, 162  
 Nicaragua, 205  
 Noble, James, 14, 15, 20, 23  
*North American Review*, 212  
 North Bend (O.), 203  
 North Central Railroad, 105  
 Northern Pacific Railroad, 124  
 Northwest Ordinance, 1, 6, 14, 17, 59  
 O'Brien, Cornelius, 91, 211  
 O'Brien, William H., 210  
 Ohio County (Ind.), 60  
 "Ohio Idea," 137-38  
 Ohio River, 1-2, 6-7, 27, 32-33, 48, 77, 94, 211  
 Oklahoma Territory, 204  
 Ordinance of Secession, 86  
 Oswego Canal, 113  
 Overman, Ephraim, 3  
 Owen, Robert Dale, 47, 49, 50, 52, 60  
 Palmer, John M., 223  
 Parke, Benjamin, 10, 27, 35  
 Paul, John, 14  
 Pendleton Act of 1883, 181-82  
 Pendleton, George H., 71, 119, 122, 128  
 Pennington, Dennis, 23  
 Pennington, William, 73  
 Pennsylvania Central Railroad, 104, 105  
 Pensacola Bay, 95  
 People's Party, 222, 23  
 Pepper, Abel C., 47  
 Phelps, John S., 73  
 Philadelphia (Pa.), 108  
 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876, 170, 186  
 Pinkerton agents, 213  
 Pioneer life, 1-3, 7, 9, 34, 36, 43  
 Pittsburgh (Pa.), 33  
 Political parties in early Indiana, 30  
 Polly, a slave, 16-17, 28  
 Popular sovereignty, 81, 82  
 Populists, 216, 222  
 Porter County (Ind.), 62  
 Portland (Ore.), 143  
 Port William (Ky.), 6, 33  
 Posey County (Ind.), 49  
 Posey, Thomas, 12-13  
 Potomac River, 119  
 Pottawatomie Indians, 123  
*Prisoners of Niagara, or The Errors of Education*, 5-6  
 Prohibition Party, 223  
 "Queen City of the West," 7  
 Quakers, 3  
 Radicals, 128, 129-31, 134  
 Randall, Samuel J., 122, 166, 170, 171, 185, 206  
 Randolph County (Ind.), 174, 176  
 Rariden, James, 24-26, 47, 54  
 Ray, James Brown, 20-23  
 Reconstruction Act, 130  
 Records, Thomas, 28  
 Reed, James G., 47  
 Reed, Thomas B., 203, 206-07, 210, 223  
 Reform Club of Hudson County, New Jersey, 147  
 Republican Party, 70-72, 74-80, 82, 87, 90, 99, 101, 111, 112, 124, 130, 137-38, 141, 145, 151, 165, 172,

- 202, 208, 217-19, 222-24  
 Resumption Act of 1875, 140  
 Richmond (Ind.), 23, 174  
 Richmond (Va.), 6, 81-82  
 Riley, James Whitcomb, 219  
 Rising Sun (Ind.), 7, 34  
 River View Cemetery, Aurora Ind., 221, 225  
 Roberts, James (Judge), 163  
 Roberts, Omar F. (Judge), 44, 68, 229  
 Robeson, George M., 163  
 Rock River, 211  
 Rush County (Ind.), 84  
 Russia, 156  
 Ryman, John, 69  
  
 St. Croix River, 145  
 St. Croix and Lake Superior Railroad Co., 145, 147  
 St. Louis (Mo.), 33, 108, 222  
 St. Paul (Minn.), 145  
 "Salary Grab," 157  
 Salem (Ind.), 35  
 San Francisco Bay, 147  
 Schools, early Indiana, 34, 35  
 Scotland, 3  
 Scott County (Ind.), 48  
 Scott, James, 15-17, 20, 22-23, 25, 27-28, 33, 35, 38  
 Scott, Thomas A., 104-05  
 Secession, 76, 84, 85-86, 88, 92, 94, 116  
 Seminary Square, Aurora, Ind., 34  
 Sewell, Arthur, 222-23  
 Shelby County (Ind.), 40, 193  
 Sherman, John, 72-73  
 Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890, 208, 214  
 Sherman, William Tecumseh (Gen.), 104  
 Silver Party, 222  
 Sioux Agencies, 195  
 Slavery, 6, 16-17, 28-31, 54-56, 58-60, 70, 72, 76, 77-80, 124, 129  
 Smith, Oliver H., 11-12, 15-16, 18, 20-22, 25, 31  
 Smith, Nicholas, 223  
 Smith, William N. H., 73  
 Smiley, Ross, 47  
 South Bend (Ind.) *Tribune*, 175  
 Spain, 163  
 "Spoils System," 160  
 Spooner, Philip L., 69  
 Springer, William M., 210  
 Springfield rifles, 105  
 Standing Rock Indian Agency, 195  
 Stanton, Edwin M., 131-32  
 Starke County (Ind.), 60  
 State Baptist Convention of Indiana, 40  
 Statehood in Indiana, 13-14  
 State Supreme Court of Indiana, 16, 20-28, 33, 35, 38, 183  
 Steele, George W. (Major), 225  
 Steele, William, 23-24  
 Stevens, Stephen C., 22, 27  
 Stevens, Thaddeus, 71, 122, 129, 134  
 Stevenson, John W., 73  
 Stoll, John B., 175  
 Strikes, 210  
 Sulzer, Marcus R., 223  
 Sunday Schools, 26, 37, 38-39  
 "Sundry Civil Appropriations Bill," 155  
 Sullivan, Jeremiah, 35  
 Switzerland County (Ind.), 13, 15  
  
 Taney, Roger B. (Chief Justice), 71  
 Taylor, Waller, 14, 20  
 Temperance, 26, 37, 40  
 Temperance Party, 70  
 Tenure of Office Act, 130-31  
 Test, Charles H. (Judge), 12, 20, 21-22, 48  
 Test, John, 24-25  
 Thirteenth Amendment, 124, 129  
 Thomas, Lorenzo (Maj. Gen.), 132  
 Tilden, Samuel J., 172, 175-76, 191, 193  
 Tipton, John, 23-27  
 Tompkins, Daniel, 20



- "Tragic Era," 172  
 "The Transit of Venus," 155  
  
 Union County (Ind.), 177  
 Union Pacific Railroad, 161  
 United States Bankrupt Court, 36  
 United States Military Academy, 167  
 United States Supreme Court, 76-77, 79  
  
 Vandenburg, Henry, 2, 10  
 Van-Wyck Committee, 102, 103, 106-08  
 Vattier, Charles, 33-34  
 Veraestau, 1, 7, 8, 18, 23, 26, 31, 42, 43, 225  
 Vevay (Ind.), 33  
 Vicksburg (Miss.), 148  
 Vigo County (Ind.), 193  
 Vilas, William F. (Gen.), 179  
 Vincennes (Ind.), 2, 33, 175  
 Virginia deed of cession, 17  
 Virginius case, 163  
 Voorhees, Daniel W., 119, 193, 223  
  
 Wabash, 2, 24, 26  
 Wabash Valley, 24-26  
 Wade-Davis Bill, 129  
 Wallace, David, 35, 47  
 Wallace, Lew, 81  
 Walpole, Thomas D., 47  
 Ward, Hamilton, 134  
 Warrick County (Ind.), 15  
 Washbourn, Elihu B., 71, 102, 122  
 Washington, D. C., 23, 27, 28, 30-31, 78-79, 88, 108, 113, 121, 159  
 Washington County (Ind.), 12, 20, 30  
  
 Washington, George, 131  
 Washington's Farewell Address, 132-33  
 "Watchdog of the Treasury," 114, 154, 175, 189, 204, 215, 223  
 Watson, James E., 218-19, 227  
 Watson, Thomas E., 222  
 Wayne County (Ind.), 3, 13, 174  
 Welles, Gideon, 107, 121  
 Western Baptist Publication and Sabbath School Society, 38  
*Western Eagle*, 32  
 Western Sunday School Board of Agency, 38  
 Whigs, 45, 47, 82  
 Whitcomb, James, 35, 46  
 White House, 122  
 Whitewater River, 2, 3, 33  
 Whitewater Valley Canal Co., 64  
 Williams, James D. ("Blue Jeans"), 175-76, 193  
 Wilmington (Ind.), 8  
 Wilson, James F., 124  
 Wilson, Walter, 15  
 Winchell (Judge), 12  
 Winchester (Ind.), 218  
 Windom Committee, 165  
 Winnebago Indians, 123  
 Women's rights, 49  
 Women's Temperance League of Winchester, Ind., 171  
 World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition, 186  
 Wright, Joseph D., 60, 67  
 Wright, Robert, 32  
  
 Yellowstone Park, 195  
 Yerba Buena, 147







